

A CATECHISM FOR CONSCIOUSNESS:  
DEVELOPING A CHRISTIAN STYLE OF CONSCIOUSNESS  
FOR THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHURCH

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## ABSTRACT

This project proposes a way to understand Christian spirituality as it manifests itself in a conscious style. The proposal is that spiritual responsibility must be internalized to a depth of the self that goes beyond any conscious function---will, thought, reason, or emotion. Definition is given to this seat of spiritual responsibility and a picture is drawn of the style of consciousness that emerges when Christian values are embodied from this core of responsibility. This picture is produced via delineation of contrasts and relationships in time and in space, and between unity and plurality. Once spirituality has been explored from the perspective of individual consciousness, the discussion is amplified to the community experience of the Church. It is affirmed that in the Christian way individual spirituality is only complete in the context of Christian community.

The method employed for the development of this proposal is interdisciplinary. Use is made of 1) process philosophy, especially the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, 2) Jungian psychology, and 3) the poetry of T. S. Eliot and e. e. cummings. The reason for this interdisciplinary approach is 1) to develop the proposal in the context of a cosmological scheme, 2) to inform the proposal with the practical understanding that psychology affords, and 3) to give the proposal imaginative and poetic power.

In Part I, Whitehead, Jung, Eliot, and cummings are explicitly discussed, and their ideas are applied to spirituality. In Parts II and III, the overall vision for spiritual formation of consciousness for the Church is presented. Here the contribution of others forms the background and is implicit in the presentation of ideas. In a 'theological postscript' the proposed vision of spirituality is related to the specific theological issues of the 'Holy Spirit' and 'the Trinity.'

The result of this approach is a unique and broad understanding of Christian spirituality. The significance of this spiritual breadth is that it allows us to engage in spiritual disciplines which relate to a large field of concern. In this way the search for spiritual intensity does not exclude but enhances the search for social justice.

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## INTRODUCTION

This project aims to do several things at once. Its central aim is to consider consciousness as an aspect of selfhood that illuminates the exploration of the Christian structure of existence.<sup>1</sup> Within this task the aim is to picture a fresh mode of Christian spirituality. This fresh mode is first cast as a style of consciousness. Then this style of consciousness is amplified into a vision for the communal spirituality of the Church.

As these tasks are pursued, two special considerations are at work. The first is that this project be rational. The second, that it be practical.

Two things are meant by rational. On the one hand, there is the concern that many parts fit together to make a whole with many ideas complementing each other to create consistency, coherence and interdependence. This form of rationality is aided by the formulation of specific thoughts within a cosmological context. In this case the cosmology of Alfred North Whitehead provides that context. On the other hand, there is the concern that many modes of feeling---poetic and imaginative, reflective and conceptual, aspiring and intentional---be fit together and harmonized in the envisionment. When a new vision is sought it must be

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<sup>1</sup>The basic idea of a structure of existence is developed by John B. Cobb, Jr., The Structure of Christian Existence (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967).

searched for in thought and in imagination, in feeling, in 'remembrance of things past,' and it must be tested through the pursuit of concrete aims.

One thing is meant by practical. This project is intended as an accompaniment to the practice of spirituality. This does not mean that it focuses on specific plans and projects for the spiritual life, though this kind of material is not completely absent. More importantly, it is intended to be the kind of discussion and presentation of ideas that affirms thinking as an act of devotion and as a discipline for spiritual formation. The project asserts a special function for ideas, images and visions. Ideas, images and visions are understood as the tools through which spiritual formation takes shape. To think, to imagine, to reflect, to formulate, to express---all these activities are part of the practice of spirituality. They are spiritual disciplines.

For these reasons, the concern to be both rational and practical, I have structured this project not as an essay on consciousness, or as a survey of contemporary views on spirituality, but after the model of a catechism. A catechism aims to present a systematic world view in a dynamic form in order to create a life style. As a catechism this project contains both 'ways of understanding', that is, ideas, and 'ways of feeling', that is, images. It also contains questions and answers. This reflects the basic



process of spiritual formation: the analysis of situations, the raising of questions, and the search for new vision.

In general then, this project is meant as a tool for the formation of spiritual existence. The aim for a structured form of Christian life, however, is not the final goal. Structure itself must contain the elements that ensure its transcendence. That is, our formal life must direct us to Christ. As we align ourselves faithfully to Christ we will be enabled to know when a structure must be cast off and a new form of life entered into.

This project is in three parts. Part One is background material, expanded footnotes if you will, for the parts that follow. Part One discusses the thought of four authors: Whitehead, Jung, Eliot, and cummings. These are the thinkers and poets who have supplied me with the groundwork for an exploration of spirituality. Part Two, the Catechism for Consciousness, presents a vision for how we can include consciousness as important in our response to God. Part Three expands the approach in Part Two and carries the vision into the sphere of communal life.

## **PART ONE**

### **BACKGROUND**

## CHAPTER I

## RELEVANT WHITEHEADIAN NOTIONS

The Cosmological Scheme

In Whitehead's cosmology the ultimate 'matters-of-fact' are occasions of process, drops of experience, and not substantial pieces of matter. The cosmos is a plenum of occasions---those in the process of becoming and those which have come to be. The occasions that have 'come-to-be' are the past; those 'coming-to-be' are the present; the future is empty of actuality, open to possibility.

The process of coming to be is a process of feeling, and of organizing feeling. Past actual occasions are available for feeling, and without them there would be no present actuality, for the process of feeling has no actuality apart from 'feeling something'.

If there were nothing available for feeling but past actual occasions the cosmos would be a vast, continual repetition. This is, as is obvious in common experience, not the case. An occasion in process also has available for feeling artistic plans for ways to feel things---guises, shapes, forms. These forms enter into the constitution of actual occasions. Their presence can be felt as the determining characteristic in past actual occasions, and they contribute character and definiteness to occasions in

process. Whitehead names these artist's plans "Pure Potentials for the Specific Determination of Fact" or "Eternal Objects."<sup>2</sup> The supreme artist is God; there are also lesser artists, divine and devilish. The Eternal Objects allow for variety and specificity in feeling, and for novelty.

The process of coming to be is a process of feeling the many, the plenum (including actual occasions and eternal objects), in one unity of feeling. The most general summary of Whitehead's cosmology is perhaps this sentence, "The many become one, and are increased by one."<sup>3</sup>

A unity of feeling is achieved through the progressive harmonization of diverse feeling by contrast, until a final harmony is achieved: the occasion reaches its satisfaction. The movement is from a vague, diverse feeling of many-ness to an intense, singular feeling of oneness. The process is a continual movement toward intensity of feeling.

In our everyday human experience the production of art is most closely analogous to the ultimate cosmic process. The categories of understanding most applicable to the process of becoming are aesthetic categories.

In every occasion in process there is a subjective aim toward definiteness of feeling. The subjective aim is

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<sup>2</sup>Alfred North Whitehead, Process and Reality (New York: Macmillan, 1957), p. 32.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

the inner artist, the self-creativity of a becoming occasion. The aim takes shape as the moment takes shape. That is, 'the subjective aim is what it is so the occasion may become what it is becoming.'<sup>4</sup> This paradoxical language must be pondered, not balked at. Once the satisfaction is arrived at, everything is lost. The occasion fades out from subjective immediacy into objective immortality, from a subject feeling into an object for feeling. The cosmos has this character of perpetual perishing---there is continual loss of immediacy. There is also a character of obstinate permanence. What has come to be exists forever, is forever felt, never lost.

Every 'being' in the cosmos exists by this feeling process. Not all creatures, however, have conscious feelings. The human experience of being conscious is a particular phenomenon to be explained in terms of cosmic generalities, though it is not itself generally manifested.

### The General Conception of Consciousness

A complete technical presentation of Whitehead's theory of consciousness requires the understanding of many technical details of Whitehead's cosmology. For the purpose of this project it will suffice to highlight those features of Whitehead's cosmology that contribute directly to this

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 342.

development of a Christian style of consciousness. A sketch of seven basic ideas about consciousness follows.

1. Consciousness is a subjective form of feeling within an occasion in process.

Whitehead writes, "Consciousness concerns the subjective form of a feeling."<sup>5</sup> Every prehension or feeling can be analysed into three factors: a) the 'subject' which is prehending, b) the 'datum' which is prehended, c) the 'subjective form', how that subject prehends that datum.<sup>6</sup> A subjective form is a 'how' of feeling, though it requires a certain objective datum (see #3), and is what it is because of the 'subject.' The 'how' of feeling embodies intensity of feeling and novelty of feeling which have their origin in the 'mental pole'---the pole that feels eternal objects. "The 'intensity' achieved belongs to the subjective form of the satisfaction."<sup>7</sup> And "The essential novelty of a feeling attaches to its subjective form."<sup>8</sup>

Consciousness is 'located' within an occasion in the process of becoming and is one subjective form among many to be included in a final synthesis of feeling which is beyond consciousness.

2. Consciousness is derived from and harmonized

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 369.    <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 35.    <sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 354.

with other feelings. It is not the totality of our experience, nor is it in isolation.

Whitehead writes,

The simplicity of clear consciousness is no measure of the complexity of complete experience....Consciousness is the crown of experience, only occasionally attained, not its necessary base.<sup>9</sup>

The admission of unconscious or pre-conscious experience is not difficult for Whitehead. There is a background of feeling that supports consciousness and out of which consciousness arises. The background is massive and vague, and consciousness is an abstraction from and elimination of massive feeling with a yield of clearer, simpler feeling.

Consciousness is an ever-shifting process of abstracting shifting quality from a massive process of exxential existence. It emphasizes. And yet if we forget the background, the result is triviality.<sup>10</sup>

The significance of consciousness rests on its association with massive feeling. Whitehead names the product of abstraction 'Appearance'. Appearance always needs to be vivified by its association with 'Reality', which remains in the background of conscious awareness. "In the dim recesses behind consciousness there is the sense of realities behind abstraction. The sense of process is always present."<sup>11</sup> Or again, "It is Appearance which in

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 408.

<sup>10</sup>Alfred North Whitehead, Modes of Thought (New York: Free Press, 1966), p. 108.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

consciousness is clear and distinct, and it is Reality which lies dimly in the background with its details hardly to be distinguished in consciousness."<sup>12</sup>

3. Consciousness is the feeling-form of the affirmation-negation contrast. This is how consciousness effects its abstraction and achieves vivid clarity.

Whitehead writes,

The subjective form will only involve consciousness when the 'affirmation-negation' contrast has entered into it. In other words, consciousness enters into the subjective forms of feelings, when those feelings are components in an integral feeling whose datum is the contrast between a nexus which is, and a proposition which in its own nature negates the decision of its truth or falsehood....Consciousness is the way of feeling that particular real nexus, as in contrast with imaginative freedom about it.<sup>13</sup>

A contrast is a 'feeling together in a unity'. It is an integration. In this case the 'components' of the integration are a) a datum physically felt, and b) a proposition conceptually entertained. In this way consciousness is an integration of the physical and the mental poles of experience.

A feeling whose datum is this contrast between a nexus and a proposition with its logical subjects as members of that nexus is termed an 'intellectual feeling'. "It is the contrast between 'in fact' and 'might be'...the sub-

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<sup>12</sup>Alfred North Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas (New York: Free Press, 1961), p. 270.

<sup>13</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, p. 399.



jective form of the feeling of this contrast is consciousness."<sup>14</sup>

The understanding of consciousness as involving the contrast of what is and what might be is especially valuable for an understanding of how experiences that are usually unconscious may be brought into consciousness. In particular the experience of God is nearly always unconscious because God is so common in our experience that there is no feeling of negation or absence to contrast with God's presence. God can be felt consciously if a person contrasts God's proposal for her (felt by a hybrid physical feeling) with her own conscious self-judgment. Some contrasting of this sort, however dim, must probably go on for there to be any self-awareness at all.

4. Consciousness is the feeling form of 'importance'. This is the valuation that is attached to the subjective form of consciousness:

"Intellectual feelings...are concentration of attention involving increase of importance."<sup>15</sup> Or,

Our enjoyment of actuality is a realization of worth, good or bad. It is a value experience. Its basic expression is---Have a care, here is something that matters! Yes---that is the best phrase---the primary glimmering of consciousness reveals, something that matters.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 407. <sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 416.

<sup>16</sup>Whitehead, Modes of Thought, p. 116.

This quality of consciousness makes consciousness important. Thus Tillich's idea that religion is Ultimate Concern suggests that we ought to pay attention to consciousness. What we are conscious of, and how we are conscious, is the most basic expression of our concern.

5. In common with all feelings, conscious feelings are informed by the subjective aim, which in turn is informed by God's primordial aim.

Whitehead writes, "The subjective form is determined by the subjective aim at further integration so as to obtain the 'satisfaction' of the completed subject."<sup>17</sup> The subjective aim is the free, creative aim by which an occasion in process determines how it will integrate its feelings to be what it will be. The subjective aim is not 'there from the start' but emerges into clarity as the occasion emerges into oneness. However, "In the primary phase of the subjective process there [is] a conceptual feeling of the subjective aim."<sup>18</sup> This primary subjective aim is derived from God. "The primary phase is a hybrid physical feeling of God, in respect to God's conceptual feeling which is immediately relevant to the universe 'given' for that concrescence."<sup>19</sup> God's conceptual feeling is the primordial aim for the subject. As the occasion-in-

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<sup>17</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, p. 29.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 342. <sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 343.

process moves toward its satisfaction it modifies this initial phase derived from God. "Responsibility is entirely concerned with this modification."<sup>20</sup>

The Christian can interpret the fulfillment of God's primordial aim to be the meaning of faithfulness. We see that faithfulness or its lack rests with the subjective aim; and the subjective aim is responsible for what the subject becomes, and thus, what contributions it makes to others.

6. In common with all feelings, conscious feelings are transcended by what is felt, and will be transcended when the final satisfaction is achieved. This fact is mentioned as a reiteration of the basic fact of process: as soon as 'satisfaction' is reached the occasion is transcended by a new "breath of feeling."<sup>21</sup>

The evaluation of this fact that consciousness is transcended is an important part of conscious style. To give an example, one style of consciousness might be a solipsistic style which would feel consciousness as the ultimately real, with no reality transcending it. We can ask if this style is faithful to Whitehead's view (obviously not). We can also ask if it is consonant with Christian values.

7. Finally, we must recognize that there is a flow

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 342.    <sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

of conscious feeling from occasion to occasion in the life of the soul.

The flow of conscious feeling 'flickers' and is variable, but there is, in general, a distinct continuity of feeling. Enough, at least, so that we can talk of the 'life of consciousness'.

Whitehead writes about the "continuity of the soul so far as concerns consciousness" this way:

There is a curious variation in the vividness of the successive occasions of the soul's existence. We are living at full stretch with a keen observation of external occurrence; then external attention dies away and we are lost in meditation; the meditation gradually weakens in vivid presentation: we doze; we dream; we sleep with a total lapse of the stream of consciousness. These functions of the soul are diverse, variable and discontinuous."<sup>22</sup>

In the flow of consciousness another operation in addition to 'consciousness as abstraction' enters the scene.

Consciousness...which is the extreme vividness of experience, does not rest content with the dumb sense of importance behind the veil. Its next procedure is to seek the essential connections within its own conscious area. This is the process of rationalization. This process is the recognition of essential connection within the apparent isolation of abstracted details. Thus rationalization is the reverse of abstraction...."<sup>23</sup>

The process of rationalization---of relating and harmonizing factors within consciousness---is also an opportunity for style. For Whitehead, rationality enables consciousness "To recover concrete reality within the

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<sup>22</sup>Whitehead, Modes of Thought, p. 162.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

disjunction of abstraction."<sup>24</sup> This 'connecting-up' is Art. Art "unlooses depths of feeling from behind the frontier where precision of consciousness fails."<sup>25</sup> Art acts out---re-lives---the forms of vivid experience: Beauty. Vividness of experience is achieved through the harmonization of wide and contrasted feeling. The flow of consciousness can be the 'art of the soul' as there is the embodiment of Beauty through coordination of feelings within its flow.

None of the above seven features of consciousness are determinative of conscious style. For style is not 'what is the case' but 'how'. 'How' is not a metaphysical question. It is a question of value. But, these facts of consciousness can all enter into the makeup of a conscious style, in various ways.

It is not only Whitehead's theory of consciousness that has influenced this project. Perhaps of more importance for the style here proposed are Whitehead's definitions of three ultimate values: Truth, Beauty, and Peace. Each of these values has an application in terms of conscious style.

"Truth is the conformation of Appearance to Reality."<sup>26</sup> In this paper I make a theological interpretation of Whitehead's definition, with this idea: Christian

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, p. 271.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 241.

Truth is the conformation of Appearance to God's feeling of Reality.

Vividness and intensity of feeling in part depends on the inclusion in conscious feeling of awareness of the dim background and the maintenance of a clear or true line of derivation from massiveness.

"Beauty is the mutual adaption of the several factors in an occasion of experience."<sup>27</sup> Beauty aims at 'mutual enhancement of feeling' through 'patterned contrasts, so that the prehension of the whole of its parts produces the fullest harmony of mutual support."<sup>28</sup>

The aim at Truthful Beauty is the highest aim of art, and I take this as a principle of style for Christian consciousness.

Peace "carries with it a surpassing of personality"; it is "self-control at its widest"; it is "the understanding of tragedy," "the intuition of permanence," the "purification of the emotions."<sup>29</sup> The realization of Peace in consciousness requires a broadening of conscious interest and attention through commitment to values and ideals beyond self interest. It involves a broadening of inclusiveness in feeling to comprehend tragedy and loss. It shows the sowing of tragedy to be reaped in joy. It comes as a gift.

The Whiteheadian roots of this project have been

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 252.    <sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 285-286.

strengthened by contact with other Whiteheadian thinkers. The idea of style in consciousness follows upon (and probably departs from) John Cobb's The Structure of Christian Existence. It is the general idea of the whole book that is particularly helpful. Cobb identifies variations in ways or structures of 'being' in different historical and cultural settings. This suggests, first, that a good way to understand what it is to be a Christian is in terms of a way of structuring existence. This is made clear as the Christian way is held in contrast to others. This suggests, second, that structures of existence are not ultimate matters of fact; though they may be determined historically they may also change, be lost, or be transcended.

A most specific idea in Cobb's book has also influenced the shape of this paper. Cobb marks one indentifying characteristic of Christian Existence to be an individual's acceptance of 'radical responsibility' for herself. I interpret this when I suggest that Christian Existence requires the location of one's 'seat of existence' in the subjective aim. I find this an exciting and problematic idea. The exciting aspect is that it opens the way for critical and creative reflection on the way one is conscious. The problematic aspect is that it means being a responsible self goes beyond the bounds of consciousness, alone. It is at this point that Jung's psychology leads the

way.

My effort in this project is to suggest a possible style of consciousness that a) comes from a radical acceptance of one's responsibility for one's feelings---consciousness included, and b) that celebrates the fact that we are beholden to God in our unconsciousness. The shape of our consciousness is only a fruit of the Spirit. We can learn to be creatively faithful from a center that is 'felt more deeply than heard.'



## CHAPTER II

## JUNG'S OBSERVATIONS ON PSYCHIC WHOLENESS

The Individuation Process

The 'process of individuation' is the name C. G. Jung gives to the pattern of growth to psychic maturity. Jung developed his view of this pattern from his observation of sequences of dreams in individuals over a period of years.

In Jung's view dreams carry significant symbolic material and are a message carrier from the unconsciousness to consciousness. Observation over long periods of time reveals a "hidden regulating or directing tendency at work, creating a slow, imperceptible process of psychic growth."<sup>30</sup> Jung names this directive source of the movement toward maturity the 'Self'. The Self encompasses the total psyche and is to be distinguished from the 'ego' which is a sense of self-ness that is the organizing center of the conscious sphere.

In our psychic immaturity the ego is felt to be important and in control. The immaturity of this way of feeling one's self rests in the fact that the unconscious is ignored and not accepted as part of one's self-ness. There is a lack of psychic wholeness.

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<sup>30</sup>Carl G. Jung (ed.), Man and His Symbols (Garden City: Doubleday, 1964), p. 161.

The urge toward wholeness, Jung has observed, comes from this unconscious nucleus, and first makes itself felt in dreams and in symbols. For Westerners one of the most powerful symbols of the Self is Christ, who is imagined as the source and example of holiness---wholeness.

The growth to psychic maturity is a journey toward a wholeness of consciousness and unconsciousness that centers on the Self as the point of integration and power, instead of the ego. In the simplest words, this process of individualization is the "conscious coming-to-terms with one's own inner center (psychic nucleus) or Self."<sup>31</sup>

This journey toward growth tends to involve similar stages or steps for many people. The pattern is represented in myths, folk-tales, religious ritual, and art. The journey begins with some challenge to the ego---there is a realization of lack of power, perhaps the unconscious asserts itself as a contra-power. We discover that 'that which we will to do, we do not do.'

A need emerges to adapt consciousness to unconscious factors. Through dreams more of the unconscious emerges into consciousness. We discover a dark side or 'shadow' of ourselves. All the things we see in others and dislike turn out to be a hidden part of our own self. Jung calls this first part of the journey 'the realization of the shadow.' This dark side must be integrated with consciousness.

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 166.

When this personal shadow becomes integrated other aspects of the unconscious structure begin to appear in consciousness. If one is a male he may discover the presence of a woman within his shadow side. The 'female' aspect of himself, in other words, has been kept out of consciousness. A woman may have done this with her 'male' aspect. There must be conscious integration of these complementary aspects of one's self. When this is done positively a person's character draws strength and 'spiritual firmness' from the broader inclusiveness of feeling.

Finally, after a person has wrestled with the Shadow and has successfully integrated the Anima (woman within) or Animus (man within), the unconscious appears in a new symbolic form representative of the Self. As mentioned earlier the Self may be symbolized in many ways---as a wise old man or woman, as an Earth Mother, as a wonderful Child. Christ functions importantly as a symbol of the Self. The most significant quality of the symbols of the Self is the quality of wholeness through 'balanced integration.' Mandalas are often representative of patterns of wholeness, the circle representing the totality of the Self, its division into four equal parts representing the balanced unification of the four functions of consciousness. The main significance of Christ as a symbol for the Self is in the fact that Christ embodies the process of 'dying and rising.' In the process of individuation the ego-as-center must die so that the Self

can rise as true center.

In general, then, the process of individuation is a process of restructuring the relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness so that consciousness is felt to be rooted in the unconsciousness and that consciousness and unconsciousness together form the totality of the Self. This is psychic maturity.

### The Four Functions within Consciousness

Jung identifies four functions within consciousness: feeling, thinking, intuition, sensation. Various balances between these feeling functions, habitually maintained, define different psychological types. Certain imbalances define psychological illness. In psychic maturity the four functions are optimally helpful to each other and complementary. The intensified coordination of functions within consciousness is finally the product of the individuation process.

Here is a general summary of the four functions:

Feeling: a process that imparts value to what is felt, like or dislike, acceptance or rejection. It is an entirely subjective process.

Intuition: a process that "transmits perceptions in an unconscious way."<sup>32</sup> In Intuition contents appear as

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<sup>32</sup>Carl G. Jung, The Basic Writings (New York: Modern Library, 1959), p. 262.

'wholes', not deduced or construed. Intuitions carry the sense of being given.

Sensation: "That psychological function which transmits a physical stimulus to perception."<sup>33</sup> Basically this means sense-perception. Like intuition, sensation is felt as given.

Thinking: Thinking is the activity of connecting conscious experiences conceptually. It is productive, not receptive.

One could generalize these four functions into two kinds of activity: 1) the ordering, productive functions: Feeling and Thinking, and 2) the perceiving, reproductive functions: Intuition and Sensation. Jung calls the former 'rational functions' and the latter 'irrational functions.' Perhaps these two sides of conscious feeling are analogous to Whitehead's mental and physical poles. Jung says the irrational functioning "depends essentially upon objective stimuli, which owe their existence to physical and not to mental causes."<sup>34</sup> In one sentence Jung sums up the characters of the functions: "Sensation tells you that something exists; thinking tells you what it is; feeling tells you whether it is agreeable or not; and intuition tells you

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 268.

<sup>34</sup>Jung, Man and His Symbols, p. 61.

whence it comes and where it is going."<sup>35</sup>

There are two basic psychological types: the extrovert and the introvert. Jung is the one who coined these terms. The four functions have a different character depending on whether extroversion or introversion is dominant. The extroverted type is mainly oriented to the 'objective' world, and objective factors are the absolute. Thinking is dominated by sense-perception. It is positive and productive, leads to new facts or explanatory generalities, but it never goes beyond what is given in objective experience. Feeling focuses on 'the object'; valuations tend to correspond to objective values; and the person strongly holds to feelings generated by tradition. For the extroverted sensation type, objects have a sensuous hold, and strength of sensation is the criterion of value. The extroverted intuitive type is fascinated by the possibilities that surround objects. This type is often the advocate of 'that which holds the seeds of future promise.' He or she inspires enthusiasm in others and often leaves to others the drudgery of carrying out his or her intuitive vision of what might be.

The introverted types are more governed by subjective factors of experience, and rely on that which outer impressions constellate in the subject. The introvert, from the start, is more oriented to the Self than to the ego, while the extrovert, more attached to the objective, is more likely

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

to feel her or himself to be object-like and center this in the ego-feeling.

In feeling the introverted type "Strives after an inner intensity, to which, at the most, objects contribute only an accessory stimulus."<sup>36</sup> There is an effort to have underlying images be given 'reality' in feeling. Sensation mostly has to do with objects, but the introverted sensation type "concerns himself with the subjective perception released by the objective stimulus."<sup>37</sup> Introverted intuition focuses on the processes behind consciousness. The unconscious images represent possibilities for life-outlook. The introverted, like the extroverted, intuitive type is fascinated by the possibilities but is indifferent to what possibilities are in fact realized. In thinking the introverted type focuses on subjective content. This type is more likely to think of new views than new facts.

The observation and analysis of psychological types illustrates a variety of types of conscious style. Though the various types are not in themselves types of mental illness by any means, they are not the ideal either. For Jung, the ideal is that there be a mutually supportive balance among all the functions and between inward and outward attention. In such a balance no function is exclusively dominant. The

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<sup>36</sup>Carl G. Jung, Psychological Types (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 489.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 499.

achievement of a style of balanced functioning within consciousness comes as the unconscious is fully integrated with consciousness through the individuation process.

### Jung and Whitehead

It is valuable to compare Jung and Whitehead to show how several of Jung's basic concepts might be grounded in, or amplified by Whitehead's cosmology. The Jungian concepts to be discussed are: the structure of the psyche, the Self, the individuation process, the archetypes, and the importance of polarity. No attempt has been made to be thoroughly systematic. This is a tentative, beginning comparison. It will become apparent that on many points Jung finds support in Whitehead, but not on all. The points of difference are of great interest, and indicate 'critical points' for either system.

Jung's psychic structure has three layers: consciousness, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious. The most controversial of these is the idea of the collective unconscious, "a common psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature which is present in every one of us."<sup>38</sup> In Whitehead's philosophy we find a supporting doctrine: every actual entity contains the whole past actual world, which means it is totally interdependent with every other actuality and

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<sup>38</sup> Carl G. Jung, The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 4.



that existence, being, is collective. This means that every past way of being a human being, every past human image, symbol, or idea is present in my experience now, and is a potential for conscious awareness, or will have some present effect.<sup>39</sup> Thus, we share a common inheritance. Whitehead's idea is applicable to any actual entity, from an atom in a rock to a moment in the life of a human soul. Thus it is more general than Jung's notion of the collective unconscious which has particular reference to human life. Jung's specific characterization of the collective unconscious fills in with concrete fact a general notion of Whitehead's.

In addition to the collective side of experience, both Jung and Whitehead emphasize the individual. The personal unconscious and consciousness 'belong' to the individual for Jung. In Whitehead the 'ultimate matters of fact' are the actual entities or occasions of experience: particular, momentary, concretions of the collective world. Whitehead's view that every individual only exists for a moment, perhaps only a split second, is not exemplified in Jung's observation. This difference becomes clearer as we examine the view of the self.

Jung observes that "the personality as a total phenomenon does not coincide with the ego, that is, with the conscious personality, but forms an entity that has to be

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<sup>39</sup>See Whitehead, Process and Reality, p. 337, and references throughout to the principle of relativity.

distinguished from the ego."<sup>40</sup> The total personality is called the Self. Jung is not concerned with the ontological status of the self, but the overall impression is that Jung considers the self to substantially endure through time, even though it may undergo changes.

Whitehead's business is to be concerned with the ontological status of the self. Like Jung, he would consider an actual entity that is the self to include both consciousness and unconsciousness. The only significant difference is that Whitehead's self has only a momentary existence. Each momentary self has an instance of immediate life, comes to completion, passes out of immediacy, and is succeeded by a new moment in process. Our experience of being a person is the experience of being a series of 'personally ordered' actual occasions, as a piece of music is made up of a series of individual notes. Thus 'person' and 'self' are to be distinguished for Whitehead.

The difference between Jung's view of the self, which might be called 'psychic monism', and Whitehead's, a form of 'psychic pluralism', is important when one is concerned with the structure of spiritual existence. Whitehead's view is to be preferred for it allows us to see that there could be various styles of relationship between the moments in a personal life. Thus, there could be different

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<sup>40</sup>Carl G. Jung, Aion (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 5.

styles or ways of being a person, and personhood would not be necessarily bound to one essentially substantial self. This relationship from moment to moment in personal life is examined in the second section of Chapter VI.

On the other hand, this difference between Jung and Whitehead concerning the status of the self does not mar the fact that for both Jung and Whitehead there is change, development and growth in human life, and this suggests that Jung's view might be successfully modified by Whitehead's. Jung's process of individuation---the process of psychic growth---is similar to Whitehead's process of becoming. Whitehead's understanding is that every self-moment is an integration in which the becoming occasion puts itself together. From the plenum of collective possibility inherited at the beginning of the occasion, selections and integrations are made so that the moment in process specifies itself. The process moves from generality to particularity. This dynamic self-creating is directed by the subjective aim, the inner intentionality or decisionality of the moment. Its result is an emergent individual.

Jung also has the self go through a process of individuation. In Jung's view the process may take many years, even a life-time, contrary to Whitehead's process of becoming which occurs in an instant. It should be noted that Jung's individuation is a sort of ideal mode of integration. Though in Whitehead an integration occurs in every

moment, an ideal form of integration is not necessarily achieved. There can be growth and change from moment to moment towards greater intensity of integration. At the same time, though it is not likely, one might at any moment achieve a high ideal. In other words, for Whitehead, one might be saved in the twinkling of an eye.

For Jung, the 'director' of the individuation process is the Transcendent Function. In some ways this transcendent function is the correlate of Whitehead's subjective aim. Both the transcendent function and the subjective aim are active, dynamic functions that work from given forms. For Jung the given forms are the archetypes, and in particular the Self archetype. For Whitehead the given forms are inherited from past actualities, with particular emphasis on the ideal from God. Whitehead and Jung differ on one point with regard to the 'director' of the self. Whitehead's 'director' functions in the unconsciousness and may be a motive contrary to what one consciously believes one's motive to be. Jung's director "arises from the union of conscious and unconscious contents."<sup>41</sup> The location of the director may have particular significance for the understanding of our spiritual task.

We have observed that for both Jung and Whitehead

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<sup>41</sup>Carl G. Jung, The Portable Jung (New York: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 273.

the process of individualization (Jung) or becoming (Whitehead) proceeds with reference to given forms. In some respect then, both thinkers could be called idealists. Ideal forms become manifest in particular experience. For each the ideal forms are, at their primary level, removed from particularity. Jung's 'archetypes as such' are hypothetical, empty, basic forms.<sup>42</sup> The archetypal representations, images and ideas, are "varied structures which all point back to one essentially 'irrepresentable' basic form."<sup>43</sup> Jung compares the archetypal images to a set of variations on a ground theme.

Whitehead calls his given forms Eternal Objects, or Potentials for the Specific Determination of Fact. On the most general and absolute level, eternal objects are 'pure potentials' abstracted from their relevance to any given occasion. 'Real potentials' are related to an actual situation.<sup>44</sup> For example, redness-as-such is a pure potential; the idea of painting this chair with red paint is a real potential. Thus for both Jung and Whitehead, the forms have specific content when they become part of someone's experience.

One difference between Jung and Whitehead on this issue is the location of the forms. Jung's archetypes

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<sup>42</sup>Jung, Archetypes, p. 5.

<sup>43</sup>Jung, Basic Writings, p. 83.

<sup>44</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, p. 102.

populate the collective unconscious. Whitehead's eternal objects are in the 'realm of eternal objects' which is located in the primordial nature of God, that is, God's unconsciousness.<sup>45</sup> The significance of Whitehead's view is that humans are not the final source or creator of the potential patterns for human life. These are supplied, as a gift or curse. Jung would say no different, even though for him the potential patterns are placed in collective human experience.

A final topic remains to be discussed in the comparison of Jung and Whitehead: polarity. For each thinker polarity has a peculiar importance. It may be, with this issue, that Jung's thought can be amplified by the philosophic generalities Whitehead supplies. Whitehead's actual entities are di-polar. They have a physical pole and a mental pole. The physical pole experiences things in their concrete actuality. It is receptive and reproductive. As was mentioned in the earlier discussion, it is perhaps analogous to the irrational functions of Jung: intuition and sensation. The mental pole embodies 'imaginative freedom' about the hard facts of experience. It is the agent of novelty, liveliness, fresh feeling. It has an ordering, productive, creative function like Jung's rational functions: feeling and thinking. The contrast between the mental and the physical pole produces consciousness. Jung's theory of

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 521-524.

the origins and dynamics of consciousness similarly depends on the power of contrast.

This correlation between Jung's functional poles and Whitehead's ontological poles has suggestive implications for one of the inconsistent aspects of Jung's thought: the relationship of psychic facts to material facts. Sometimes Jung speaks as if psychic facts were ultimate, as in these statements, "nobody can deny that without the psyche there would be no world at all," or "Consciousness is a precondition of being."<sup>46</sup> At other times he speaks as if psyche and matter were equally ultimate, "Since psyche and matter are contained in one and the same world, and moreover are in continuous contact with one another and ultimately rest on irrepresentable, transcendental factors, it is not only possible but fairly probable, even, that matter and psyche are two different aspects of one and the same thing."<sup>47</sup> This latter statement expresses precisely Whitehead's position. The 'ultimate matters of fact' are a union of matter and spirit. The interesting thing is that for Whitehead this contrast between physicality and mentality is the source of dynamism, of intensity, of greater complexity of feeling and aliveness---values essential to Jung's thinking as well.

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<sup>46</sup>Carl G. Jung, The Undiscovered Self (Boston: Little, Brown, 1958), pp. 84, 46.

<sup>47</sup>Jung, Basic Writings, p. 5.

In general, Jung and Whitehead share a grounding in what might be called the principle of polarity. Esther Harding captures the significance of polarity in words that both Jung and Whitehead might affirm:

The very fact that our psyche is a dynamic system means that we can experience value only in polarized form, that is, as a tension flowing between opposite poles. Absence of such polarity would mean a static uniformity that could have neither meaning nor power, that is, it would produce in us neither consciousness, nor growth and development.<sup>48</sup>

This discussion of Jung and Whitehead will be helpful as we move to apply the thought of each to the practice of Christian spirituality. A clear awareness of their similarities and differences will aid the perspicacity of the application.

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<sup>48</sup> Esther Harding, The 'I' and the 'Not-I' (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 209.



## CHAPTER III

## RELEVANT THEMES IN ELIOT'S POETRY

Two Kinds of Time

T. S. Eliot takes up many themes in his poetry but attention in this project is given to his images about two kinds of time and their relationship to how persons experience the inner life. Eliot's two kinds of time may perhaps be seen to be the same as Whitehead's two kinds of movement: the microcosmic and the macrocosmic. The microcosmic is the moving of many things into one feeling moment. This is the 'internal' process. The macrocosmic movement is the movement of increase: the moving on, the process of moment succeeding moment.

Eliot's image in the Four Quartets for the microcosmic movement is "the still point."

At the still point of the turning world  
 . . . . .  
 Where past and future are gathered<sup>49</sup> .

The still point is 'endured' as the feeling of immediate present, the presence of all, here and now in one moment. Eliot expresses this in these words, "Quick now, here, now, always."<sup>50</sup> The still point is felt as 'eternal'

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<sup>49</sup>T. S. Eliot, Collected Poems (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963), p. 177.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 209.

not 'temporal'. Eliot associates it with mystical awareness. He speaks of this special experience with his important image, the moment of the rose. The rose is an image for Christ, so the moment of the rose is a moment of communion with God; or, perhaps better said, a moment of God's incarnation.

In contrast to the still point there is movement, and Eliot's sense of time passing is like Whitehead's macrocosmic process. Eliot's image for temporal time is the dance. The dance is associated with common self-awareness, in contrast to the mystical awareness of the still point. In "East Coker" it is the 'ordinary' peasants who dance:

And see them dancing around the bonfire  
 . . . . .  
 Lifting heavy feet in clumsy shoes,  
 Earth feet, loam feet, lifted in country mirth  
 Mirth of those long since under earth  
 Nourishing the corn. Keeping time  
 Keeping the rhythm in their dancing  
 As in their living in the living seasons<sup>51</sup>

As one experiences temporal time there is memory of things past and hope for the future. There is work and struggle and dullness.

Further richness is added to these two visions of time by Eliot's association of a different mode of self-awareness with each different mode of time. From the perspective of flux and passing time, a self has a past which

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 183.

is remembered, and the past is redeemed as it is felt with new meaning, or feeds a vision for the future. Grover Smith, critic of Eliot, interprets the flux as the perspective of a personal center, while the perspective of eternity is a true center. From the true center the past is not remembered; rather, "it endures in immediate actuality." The personal center gives way to a feeling of things from the true center in which the self meets God and the past is preserved as "an objective, eternal fact present to the mind of God."<sup>52</sup>

In the Four Quartets Eliot seeks a reconciliation of the timeless moment and time flowing. Smith writes, "the central theme of Four Quartets [is] the union of the flux of time with the stillness of eternity (stemming from Eliot's earlier meditations on the disparity between the real and the ideal)."<sup>53</sup> His final vision is that both times must be lived with and valued together. They are dependent on one another, as Whitehead's macrocosmic and microcosmic processes are one process displayed in two aspects.

Except for the point, the still  
point,  
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.<sup>54</sup>

Eliot's poetic formulation captures the pathos of

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<sup>52</sup>Grover Smith, T. S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 253-254.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>54</sup>Eliot, p. 177.

not being able to ignore either sense of ourselves, because of the ultimacy of both kinds of time.

We must be still and still moving  
 Into another intensity  
 For a further union, a deeper communion  
 Through the dark cold and the empty desolation,  
 The wave cry, the wind cry, the vast waters  
 Of the petrel and the porpoise.<sup>55</sup>

This passage deserves a detailed commentary. In the first place it expresses our necessary submission to both experiences of time: the present immediacy with its mystical intensity and the perishing of immediacy in the ordinary and universal flow: "We must be still and still moving." Eliot's poetic vision goes on to suggest more than submission to the experience. We are called---this is what must means---to cultivate our stillness and still movingness for the achievement of value. The interaction of presence and perishing can yield new intensity, and this new intensity is parallel in meaning to union and communion. The next line expresses Eliot's understanding of the process of moving to new intensity. The process involves suffering. "The dark cold and the empty desolation" is perhaps Eliot's reference to John of the Cross' dark night of the soul. The closing two lines give content to the meaning of union and communion. This is Eliot's view of the call that redeems the tension of perpetual perishing. Union is imaged as the relationship of wave cry and wind cry. The image has great

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 190.

precision. When wind blows across water it raises the waves. The shape of the wave and the wind are separate and yet not separable. The visible shape of the wave is the image of the invisible wind. Union is this kind of mutual determination and interdependence.

Finally, the relationship of the petrel and the porpoise gives content to what meaning Eliot gives to communion. The petrel is a small, dark sea bird that gains its name in allusion to Peter's attempt to walk on water. The porpoise is that fish which is not a fish. It swims under water and leaps above it where it finds its air. It possesses a wisdom and gentleness above that of ordinary sea-creatures. The porpoise and the petrel are images for Christ and his disciple. In that intermediate space between sky and deep sea, the surface of the water, they intermingle. Between the extremities of eternality and time, in the foreground of movement, there is communion between Christ and the disciple.

Thus we are called to reconcile the two kinds of time. The way for this reconciliation is through the dark night of the soul. The image for this reconciliation is the relationship of Christ and the disciple. With the deepened communion between us and God the conflict between two kinds of time finds unification.

## Suffering

We have seen that the struggle in life, for Eliot, is to reconcile the two kinds of life in time. The reconciliation is the achievement of love; it is achieved through suffering and is the recognition that suffering and love are the same.

Eliot represents the way to life through the way of renunciation, the suffering of the mystic:

I said to my soul, be still, and let the dark come upon you  
Which shall be the darkness of God

. . . . .  
I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope  
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing; wait without  
love

For love would be love of the wrong thing; there is yet faith  
But the faith and love and the hope are all in the waiting.  
Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought;  
So the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the  
dancing.<sup>56</sup>

In this struggle the attainment of new life depends on the work of Christ, who himself has suffered. Eliot names Christ "the wounded surgeon."

The wounded surgeon plies the steel  
That questions the distempered part;  
Beneath the bleeding hands we feel  
The sharp compassion of the healer's art  
Resolving the enigma of the fever chart.

. . . . .

The chill ascends from feet to knees,  
The Fever sings in mental wires.  
If to be warmed, then I must freeze  
And quake in frigid purgatorial fires

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 187.

Of which the flame is roses, and the smoke is briars.

The dripping blood our only drink  
 The bloody flesh our only food:  
 In spite of which we like to think  
 That we are sound, substantial flesh and blood---  
 Again, in spite of that, we call this Friday good.<sup>57</sup>

In spite of the pain, we recognize this suffering  
 as love. Eliot writes:

Who then devised this torment? Love.  
 Love is the unfamiliar Name  
 Behind the hands that wove  
 The intolerable shirt of flame  
 Which human power cannot remove.  
 We only live, only suspire  
 Consumed by either fire or fire.<sup>58</sup>

But through the fire of love we may attain to the  
 saint's perfection and know that point where God is incar-  
 nate in our life. The relationship of timelessness and  
 time is the relationship of heaven to earth. We seek their  
 union.

But to apprehend  
 The point of intersection of the timeless  
 With time, is an occupation for the saint---  
 No occupation either, but something given  
 And taken, in a lifetime's death in love,  
 Ardour and selflessness and self-surrender.  
 For most of us, there is only the unattended  
 Moment, the moment in and out of time,  
 The distraction fit, lost in a shaft of sunlight,  
 The wild thyme unseen, or the winter lightning  
 Or the waterfall, or music heard so deeply  
 That it is noheard at all, but you are the music  
 While the music lasts. These are only hints and guesses,  
 Hints followed by guesses; and the rest

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 188.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 207.

Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.  
The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is  
Incarnation.  
Here the impossible union  
Of spheres of existence is actual<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 199.



## CHAPTER IV

## FRESH ASSOCIATIONS IN CUMMING'S POETRY

The poetry of e.e. cummings, unlike that of Eliot, is not dependent on literary allusion. His images are fresh and personal and their expressiveness is deepened as the poet himself draws associations and forges particular personal clusters of meaning. Of special interest to the explorations of this project is cummings' sense of time, and his representation of the process of living by dying.

Perhaps it is appropriate to say that cummings makes poetry from the perspective of Nowness; freed from past meanings his poetry has the air of sudden, celebrative, alive spontaneity. In contrast to Eliot, cummings' verse lacks a rhythm of pathos. The dark feeling that every moment passes in the flux and is lost is not a pervasive aspect of cummings' poetry.

Time as Place

Cummings' puts together a unique vision of Nowness. Briefly stated, for cummings, Now is the 'real time' in which everything comes together and there is love. Instead of focusing on the individual, lonely and even mystical experience of the true and timeless Self, cummings is enraptured by the way everything comes together in one place in the unified present moment.

From a Whiteheadian perspective, where Eliot is concerned with the private, subjective inwardness of a Self-moment, cummings is concerned with the way a moment is constituted by everything, all worlds---the way in which a moment is comprised of relationship. He writes,

Life, for eternal us, is now; and now is much too busy<sup>60</sup>  
being a little more than everything to seem anything.

now(more nearly ourselves than we)  
is a bird singing in a tree  
· · · · ·  
he sings till everywhere is here<sup>61</sup>

The thing cummings associates most strongly with Nowness is Love, for love is only possible in the now, where everything and everywhere is present, here. It is because of Love that Nowness is felt by cummings as infinitely positive. He often uses "Yes" as a proper noun, the name for Nowness. These associations are brought together in this small poem:

love is a place  
& through this place of  
love move  
(with brightness of peace)  
all places

yes is a world  
& in this world of  
yes live  
(skilfully curled)  
all worlds<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>e. e. cummings, Complete Poems (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968), p. 461.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 760.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 443.

Love--yes--nowness--peace--everywhere--here: this  
cluster of images is also associated with Truth.

Seeker of truth

follow no path  
all paths lead where

truth is here<sup>63</sup>

This truth is sought without success in the desire  
to know. It can only be felt as it is lived, in innocence  
and spontaneity.

Cummings' image for experiencing love--now--here is  
"singing."

The whole truth

not hid by matter; not by mind revealed  
(more than all dying life, all living death)  
and never which has been told or will be told

sings only---and all lovers are the song.

Here(only here)is freedom<sup>64</sup>

Or, again:

humble one(gifted with  
illimitable joy)  
bird sings love's every truth

beyond all since and why<sup>65</sup>

This singing is the song of stillness, or nowness:

But the very song of(as mountains  
feel and lovers)singing is silence<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 775.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 765, underlining mine.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 783.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 804.

### Life through Death

The most poignant of cummings' associations with Nowness is his identification of now with the time of singing birds: springtime. Spring, the time of birth, following winter, is also the time of love, the time when all comes together and 'you and me become we.'

sweet spring is your  
time is my time is our  
time for springtime is lovetime  
and viva sweet love<sup>67</sup>

may has come  
love(by yes  
every new  
bird no bigger than to sing)  
leaf is wing  
and tree is voice  
more leastfully than i am you  
,we are spring<sup>68</sup>

It is in this association of now--love--everywhere with spring that cummings brings Nowness into relationship with the flux of things---for spring is a season in the cycle of time and is associated with life coming from death. Indeed, for cummings the most pervasive theme next to Nowness is 'life found through death.' It is in submitting completely to the process of flux, dying perpetually, that 'we are spring' and can be in the now, in love.

we(by a gift called dying born)must grow<sup>69</sup>  
deep in dark least ourselves remembering

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 591.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 583.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 556.

Or, in this simple phrase, "the most who die, the more we live."<sup>70</sup>

Cummings speaks with ironic disdain of those who refuse to die---the same as those who try to know instead of feel.

Take the matter of being born. What does being born mean to mostpeople? Catastrophe unmitigated. Socialrevolution. The culture aristocrat yanked out of his hyper-exclusively untravoluptous superpalazzo, and dumped into an incredibly vulgar detentioncamp swarming with every conceivable species of undesireable organism. Mostpeople fancy a guaranteed birthproof safety of nondestructible selflessness. If mostpeople were to be born twice they'd improbably call it dying---<sup>71</sup>

In his unique way cummings presents a vision of truth, beauty, and peace in life. It is to be found in the Now, as love. But that timelessness is still in the context of flux, "the whole moves and every part stands still."<sup>72</sup> Cummings valuation of flux and the Now is summed up in these words:

in time's a noble mercy of proportion  
with generosities beyond believing  
there's time for laughing and there's time for crying  
for hoping for despair for peace for longing  
---a time for growing and a time for dying:  
a night for silence and a day for singing  
  
but more that all(as all your more than eyes  
tell me)there is time for timelessness<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 461.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 446.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 683.

His poetry is at its best when it celebrates the beauty that can only come to pass in the immediate experience, especially when, as in this poem, his cluster of images all raise their voices at once: life through death-- singing--spring--love--everywhere filling nowness--unkowable-- alive--

spring!may---  
 everywhere's here  
 (with a low high low  
 and the bird on the bough)  
 how?why  
 ---we never we know  
 (so kiss me)shy sweet eagerly my  
 most dear

(die!live)  
 the new is the true  
 and to lose is to have  
 ---we never we know---  
 brave!brave  
 (the earth and the sky  
 are one today)my very so gay  
 young love

why?how---  
 we never we know  
 (with a high low high  
 in the may in the spring)  
 live!die  
 (forever is now)  
 and dance you suddenly blossoming tree  
 ---i'll sing<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 767.

PART TWO

A CATECHISM FOR CONSCIOUSNESS

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## CHAPTER V

## PROLOGUE

Why Is Consciousness a Concern for Christians?

1. Consciousness is a contemporary religious issue.

The last two decades have seen an increase in interest in consciousness as a locus of significant value in human life. The contemporary scene confronts people with many possibilities for consciousness. There are 'mind-expanding' drugs, religious disciplines that offer transcendental awareness, biofeedback machines to develop control of brain-wave frequency. There is emphasis on consciousness-raising in women's groups and as part of revolutionary activity. A visit to any college bulletin board brings these many possibilities to attention.

Christians have occasionally found themselves to be part of these movements, especially with the issues of feminism and liberation. But, for the large part, the contemporary exploration of possibilities in consciousness has been non-Christian in origin, having its main support in religions of Eastern heritage and humanistic psychology. Christians have been in a reactionary position, and some questions have arisen. How has the Christian life been experienced in terms of the conscious life? Can Christian life be strengthened or refreshed by attention to possibilities in consciousness? The exploration of these questions is in



line with the Christian urge to respond to contemporary issues. Such responsiveness is felt to be a proper activity of a faithful soul. Christians, by their faithful openness, are pushed to enter more sensitively into dialogue with non-Christian friends who find richness in religious modes that are at variance with the Christian style.

2. Christian life has led to distinctive styles of consciousness.

In the broadest view, Christians have valued conscious awareness as a significant way to attend to important 'objects'. Puritans, with their journal keeping, attended vigorously to conscious examination and evaluation of their lives. In this century, liberal protestants have cultivated conscious, critical awareness of the world scene and have worked to consciously respond to injustice. More Orthodox styles of faith have emphasized conscious belief as a vital aspect of Christian life.

In general, the objective attention of Christians has been in two converging directions: 1) toward God's relationship to the Self, and 2) toward the needs of the World. From the beginning the value of consciousness for Christians has been in the service of these two more important values. Christians feel it is a sin to ignore---to not be conscious of---either the call of God concerning the needs of others or one's own short-comings. The objects of conscious attention are part of a Christian's larger commitment to

God's purposes for the totality of life. At the same time there is the sense that the heart of the Christian's concern transcends conscious life.

Christians who enjoy their conscious life in its service to greater values are often offended by the contemporary movements that seem to emphasize conscious experience as the final ground of value. This same feeling, perhaps, is the one that has kept Christian mysticism as a minor, perhaps deviant, form of Christianity since it tends to emphasize conscious experience of God's presence over wholistic (active and reflective) embodiment of God's aim.

3. The Christian style of life suggests new developments in Christian conscious style.

Christians have felt the responsibility to consciously attend to certain things as part of a style of life that emphasized radical self-responsibility for actions and feelings. A new step can be taken from this ground. Consciousness itself can be brought into the sphere of self-responsibility. Ways of consciousness as well as whats must be felt in light of God's aim for human life. A new question should be asked by Christians: How can I be faithful to God in the way that I am conscious?

This new step first can be taken when Christians recognize that their sin is often rooted in their very way of being conscious and that God may have an aim for a loving style of consciousness. The Christian can exclude no part

of his or her experience from the judgments of God, or the grace. The Creator of all things has an eros---a desire---for all things. Our consciousness stands under judgment. Our freedom of choice about consciousness is brought to our critical attention by the experience of different cultures and religious movements that embody different valuations of consciousness. How might we shape our way of being conscious so that it is responsive to and expressive of the gracious and judging presence of God?

This new step can be taken when Christians recognize secondly that justice issues are deeply affected by styles of consciousness. Styles of consciousness are interdependent with modes of life, societal structures, institutional and national behavior. They inter-relate with forms of oppression of people and of the other creatures. Racism, sexism, materialism, totalitarianism, and exploitation of the earth carry with them deeply entrenched conscious styles. Conscious style is a determinative microcosm within the macrocosmic life of the planet. Change in consciousness has long been recognized as an aspect of revolution. If we are concerned about justice, what does this mean for our way of being conscious?

#### What is "Conscious Style"?

1. A style is 'a way of feeling things together'.  
Style presupposes a process of 'feeling things to-

gether', and it presupposes a choice in the process of integration---choice of what to feel and how to feel. A style is characterized by both its pattern (how) and its content (what). For example, Baroque music is characterized by its way of putting musical motifs together in an organically developing manner; and it is characterized by the kind of motifs that are used.

Ultimately form and content are mutually inclusive just as there is no separation in actual occasions between the subject feeling and the objects felt. In matters of style, the more closely form and content relate and are mutually determinative, the more pure and thorough is that style.

There is a connection between style, defined in these terms, and 'symbol'. A symbol is also a 'putting together of things'. For example, when a gentle bird is a symbol for peace it is as because the nature of peace is 'felt together with' the qualities of a dove. A style may be supported by symbols and images, and a style may itself be a symbol that mediates forms of order (ways of putting things together) to new moments in the personal life or to moments of other lives. It may be that personal styles are the 'symbols' needed for the creation of civilized life, or at least, for human life in community.

## 2. Consciousness is a 'feeling form'.

We are able to answer a question such as, How do you feel about sexism? by saying, I feel conscious, or not

conscious, about it. The analysis of this simple sentence reveals our commonsense understanding of consciousness--- and of other 'feeling forms'. There is a subject, "I", who does the feeling; there is an object, "it", which is the thing felt; and there is the way, "conscious", which the subject feels the object. Consciousness, then, is such a way of feeling, but every conscious feeling also is involved with who is feeling and what is being felt.

Our commonsense usually carries two other intuitions: the feeling that "I", the feeler, is separate from "it", what is felt; and, more vaguely, the feeling that the subject and the object are formed together. For example, objects of vision seem 'out there', separate from us while at the same time we are not sure that objects of vision exist exactly as we see them apart from our seeing of them. It should be observed that the former intuition seems to have dominated Western styles of consciousness, but this has been challenged by the scientific revolution since the time of Newton.

With varying degrees, conscious experience is a feeling of things in their distinctness and particularness. Occasionally we are haunted by a lurking indistinctness in consciousness, as when, as a small child, the furniture in the room at night takes on many ominous shapes. But, the dominant characteristic of consciousness is that it is a way of feeling the definiteness of things. In conscious

experience we feel that an object of vision is just this and nothing else. This quality of consciousness imparts its sense of importance, for the essence of importance is the feeling of supreme particularness, the absence of dalliance, the momentary achievement of just-so-ness.

The clarity of consciousness comes because consciousness is the form of feeling the contrast between things as they are and things as they might be. Through contrast with all that something isn't, the thing is lifted into clarity, as a sculptured image is defined by the spaces it does not fill. This means that consciousness is a 'feeling together' of other feelings. To be precise, it is a feeling together of a) things as they are, physically felt, and b) things as they might be, conceptually entertained. Apart from such a contrast there is no consciousness.

3. A style of consciousness takes shape as there is specific coordination of three things; a) the way conscious feelings are felt with other, non-conscious feelings, with b) the way conscious feelings are related within the flow of consciousness, with c) the way conscious feelings take account of the objects that transcend feeling.

a) Conscious feelings are one kind of feeling among many kinds of feelings that constitute a subject. There is a 'subjective aim' that determines what is emphasized and how it is emphasized in the final subjective synthesis. Conscious feeling, then, is related to other unconscious or

preconscious feeling, and to an organizing aim. The way conscious feelings are put together with other feelings in a moment of becoming is one aspect of conscious style.

b) There is a flow of consciousness that results from the passage of moment to moment in personal experience. It is in the relationship between moments that temporal patterns and sequential meanings evolve in consciousness. How and what is put together within the flow of consciousness is a second aspect of conscious style.

c) Finally, the what of feeling transcends the subject, and there is an objective how of feeling inherent in the purposes of God. The final aspect of conscious style is what 'objects' and which 'how' are integrated within an individual life.

These three aspects of conscious style might be expressed in another more general set of relationships of which consciousness is a detail that tells the story: a) How it is to be a momentary Self, b) How it is to be a Person, c) How it is to be related to the World and to God. These three themes are explored in the following three-part Song and Dance Routine.

## CHAPTER VI

## A SONG AND DANCE ROUTINE

The Song

Question: How is Christian life evident in the way conscious feelings are put together with other feelings in a moment of becoming?

Definitions Consciousness does not stand alone, and we begin our spiritual formation by turning attention to the way in which consciousness fits in with the totality of the Self. 'Self' is the name to be given to the single, particular, becoming process that is any one, immediate, present moment in a person's life.

A large part of feeling must be recognized as non-conscious, or unconscious, or preconscious. The relationship between conscious and unconscious experience has been a central topic in most twentieth-century psychology. Various forms and patterns of relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness are analyzed and evaluated in various ways. The particular way of relating consciousness and unconsciousness that Jung proposes may be identified as the Christian form of wholeness we seek. For Jung, as in Christian experience, there is a problem in certain styles of consciousness---perhaps to be called sin; and there is a call to a particular way of wholeness---or holy way. There



is a journey to be undertaken to arrive at full Christian maturity in respect to the psychic life. Christian maturity manifests itself in a style of consciousness.

The Problem and the Call The problem is that a common style of consciousness is one in which consciousness is felt as standing alone and isolated, instead of in relationship to a round, fully becoming Self. Christians who sense a responsibility for the motives behind their behavior sense the falsity of such a style. It leads, furthermore, to non-relational modes of thought and feeling, and to mechanistic social structures. It also results in a dulling of conscious feeling, since the vividness of consciousness depends on the 'background' of conscious feeling.

In a conscious style that isolates consciousness from the fullness of being-becoming a false puppet-person is often put together within the conscious sphere. The 'seat of existence', the sense of life's organizing center, is felt as this puppet-person. Jung and Whitehead both identify a 'truer' center than such a 'construed' center. Whitehead's idea is that the subjective aim is the true 'agent' responsible for the shape of a moment. Jung also identifies a deeper organizing center than the ego-center. This deep center can be called the True Self.

The Call is for a conscious style in which consciousness is surrendered and becomes the servant of the True Self, the One Aim. The call is to locate one's 'seat of existence'

at one's heart, the core of being---the subjective aim.

The primary quality of the relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness is the quality of service. In this style, consciousness is felt as having roots, or depths, that supply it with life, as if there were a deep stream of living water without which consciousness would be arid. The beauty that this style aims at is the beauty achieved by the coordination of feeling, the heightening of felt relatedness between many feelings coming together in one occasion, in one Self.

Ultimately the relatedness between feelings is the product of a singular aim toward a particular unity of feeling. Thus, the first call for a Christian style of consciousness is to 'true' consciousness with the central aim. In this---as in all things---the final responsibility for the shaping of the style is in the unconscious aim. There is yet a deeper call that follows from this one.

As the relatedness of consciousness to unconsciousness is intensified another relationship emerges: the relationship between the Deep Self and God. As one becomes centered on the Deep Self one also comes closer to centering on God. In Whitehead's scheme the subjective aim receives initial in-formation from God's aim. The intersection of God and the Self is this meeting place of the initial aim and the subjective decision about this aim. We can meet God in the heart of ourselves. The meeting place of God and the Self

can be felt consciously as the contrast between God's feeling of 'me', embodied in the initial aim as judgment, and 'my' feeling of how I am. This contrast between God's judgment and my judgment is a contrast that yields awareness of an ultimate particular 'I', and may be felt with an intensity in consciousness that, in contrast to other conscious feelings, may be identified as a mystical or altered state of consciousness.

The contrast of the individual's subjective aim and God's primordial aim is a poignant instance of 'what is' and 'what might have been, and yet might be'. God's fresh feeling of what might yet be comes out of God's feeling of what might have been, but was missed. The continual freshness of possibility that God offers to us in the particularness of our failure is Grace.

The call is not only to feel this contrast but to move toward harmonizing the two aims. The harmonization of these two aims is the way and meaning of Truth.

Conscious feeling must attend to the deep stream of one's Self, and also to the subterranean stream, God.

A Scriptural Reminder "Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2.5).

Jesus himself can be a model for Christians of psychic maturity. Though we do not know the mind that was in Jesus we have an image of the fully mature person, and

Christ names such a person.

The struggle for consciousness to yield to its unconscious roots may be symbolically felt as the struggle to put Christ first in one's life---to recognize Christ as the Lord. On this level Christ is an image for the integration or harmonization of consciousness and unconsciousness.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus is the one who says "I and the Father are one." This introduces the second dimension of the relationship of consciousness to depths unknown. Beyond the struggle for consciousness to be felt as a product of deep processes there is the struggle to feel consciously the contrast at the heart of one's being between self-formation and God's information---and to make it a harmony, an 'at-one-ness.'

In full, the 'mind of Christ' is an image that embraces both feeling the wholeness of one's Self and feeling the Self in relationship to God. The richer the cultivation of these feelings, the more a Christ-ianized conscious style emerges.

Images Consciousness may be imagined as a Song with a Singer, a body and a voice. The Singer is the unconscious Self, silently moving beneath the Song, its only Sound.

e. e. cummings brings the images of singing and silence together in his poetry:

all which isn't singing is mere talking  
 . . . . .  
 but the very song of (as mountains  
 feel and lovers) singing is silence<sup>1</sup>

"All which isn't singing is mere talking" carries the intuition that consciousness is babel if it doesn't have the double fulness of Song with Singer.

"The song...of singing is silence." Underneath the audible music is the inaudible depth. The Self is just such a depth intending its Song, consciousness. cummings' phrase captures the complex interdependence of the feelings within a moment of becoming. Silence sings a song, and the song sings of silence.

The discipline of silent meditation found among some traditional Christian spiritual practices is a discipline in which singing (which is too often talking) is restrained so that the silent singer, the Deep Self, may be felt more clearly. Such discipline serves to purify singing when the time for song is resumed.

And yet, again, there is the deeper dimension even to the silence of the Deep Self. There is, as it were, a voice under the Self's inner silence, and the discipline of silent meditation finally seeks to hear this voice.

e. e. cummings names the final depth:

love is the voice under all silences<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>e. e. cummings, Complete Poems (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968), p. 804.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 768.

Time and Dimension Sense Using a spatial image, the perfection of this style could be called "centeredness". Consciousness becomes like a perfect circle when the Deep Self is felt as its center. When the Deep Self is centered on God, the circle of the Self and the circle of Love move together, like the spheres whose rotation creates heavenly music. Centeredness is a condition of simplicity, of singleness, one-ness, purity of heart.

As consciousness is felt more clearly to be a part of the whole process of 'feeling toward unity' then singularity or 'particular just-so-ness' is heightened in feeling. Centeredness yields an intensity of particular feeling in consciousness. The particular feeling is located in the immediacy of becoming.

To use a time image, to feel consciousness as part in the conerescing subject is to feel the primacy of now-ness, the immediate present.

T. S. Eliot uses these words to describe a moment of immediacy:

Quick, now, here, now, always---  
A condition of complete simplicity<sup>3</sup>

Now is also the time when, as e. e. cummings expresses it, "everywhere is here":

Now is a bird singing in a tree  
 . . . . .

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<sup>3</sup>T. S. Eliot, Collected Poems (Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1963), p. 209.

he sings til everywhere is here<sup>4</sup>

To be consciously centered on the Self is to be in touch with present, immediate aliveness. This aliveness of Now is a coming together of 'everywhere' to 'here'. Deep awareness of this moment-in-process for some is a mystical awareness of the oneness of all. Initially, centeredness may be felt as an altered state of consciousness, as the vivid awareness of the all-inclusiveness of here-now. When 'here' is felt in its particularness there is Self consciousness.

Finally, conscious attunement to the Self's deep stream is interdependent with attunement to the subterranean divine stream, for it is the felt contrast of these two streams that yields conscious awareness of the True Self.

T. S. Eliot brings these insights together as he completes the segment quoted earlier:

Quick, now, here, now, always  
A condition of complete simplicity  
(costing not less than everything)  
And all shall be well and  
All manner of thing shall be well  
When the tongues of flame are infolded  
Into the crowned knot of fire  
And the fire and the rose are one.<sup>5</sup>

This instance of well-being is set in the eternal here and now. The well-being is a singularity, a oneness:

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<sup>4</sup>cummings, p. 760.

<sup>5</sup>Eliot, p. 209.

simplicity. It comes as all is relinquished. "All shall be well" are the words of Julian of Norwich's mystical experience. The tongues of flame are an image for the Holy Spirit which proceeds as the expression of the 'Father'. Likewise, consciousness can be understood as tongues of flames arising from the unconsciousness. When consciousness centers on the Deep Self the tongues of flame are infolded into the 'crowned knot of fire'---the heart of the Self. The final condition of being well is spoken in the last line. The Rose, as in the Christmas carol "Lo, How a Rose," is an image for Christ, the incarnation of God, the Divine coming into the Human. Complete simplicity comes when the fire and the rose are one, that is, when the Self and Christ are united, when we have in us the mind which was in Christ Jesus. In the poem we can feel the winsome nearness of blood red rose and red hot fire.

Pains and Joys The development of a conscious style in line with these thoughts and images for most Christians takes the form of a journey, or quest. We begin in lost places, far from home. Consciousness may be felt as the final ultimate and the unconscious roots ignored. Or, even if there is not this lostness, there may be lack of attunement to God.

The accumulated wisdom of our tradition points to many pains in this path. Much may have to be relinquished: egotism, pride, fear of judgment, fear of love, attachment



to the present order.

Many joys are to be gained: clarity, shining refinement, enriched enjoyment of the immediate present, intensified interdependence among one's inward parts and with God.

Aims The cultivation of this form of consciousness might be achieved through many aims, and possibly, though not necessarily, through disciplines. The aims for maturity, for purity of motive lead in this direction. So also, the common discipline of self examination, confession, seeking God's judgment and grace; and the less common discipline of silence, or inner watchfulness, or, the pursuit of artistic integrity in any activity.

### The Dance

Question: How is Christian life evident in the way conscious feelings are related within the flow of consciousness?

Definitions We experience consciousness as flowing through time, with many changes. The possibility of style in the flow of consciousness centers on a) the patterns of relationship that can be manifested between the many modes of consciousness (feeling forms), and b) the objective content chosen for feeling. This section focuses on 'modal patterns'.

A pattern of possessive continuity from moment to

moment makes for Personal life. For the time being the pattern of Personal life will be accepted and the only question considered will be, What style of Person? The answer will be in terms of modes.

The Problem and the Call The various modes of consciousness have been indentified and schematized in many ways. C. G. Jung's classification is useful. He identifies four functions within consciousness: thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition. Different psychological types represent different habitual patterns of relationship between these functions. For example, the consciousness of an introverted thinking type is dominated by intuitions and thoughts importantly related, while sensation is of minor importance and feeling may be largely suppressed.

Certain patterns of extreme imbalance between functions, for example, a near total occupation with thinking to the exclusiion of all other functions, can result in a form of suffering within consciousness. We usually name it mental illness. When specific patterns of repression become the dominant style in a society forms of oppression result. Sexism, in part, can be understood as an example of this. Likewise, the tendency in Western, technologically informed styles of consciousness is to ignore the way in which interdependence yields mutual enhancement and support. This has contributed to actions that rudely disturb the mutually supportive relationships that sustain the eco-

system. We usually forget to call this mental illness.

The Call is to realize a form of beauty in conscious style. Such Beauty not only adds to an individual's intensity of inward feeling, but it sharpens the positive relationship that the individual can have throughout the societies that human life creates or supports. In the final analysis, Beauty in the flow of consciousness cannot be separated from the aim toward Beauty in each of the moments whose actuality is 'within and beneath' the virtual flow of consciousness.

C. G. Jung's ideal is that a balance be created between the four functions. Such balance is the mark of wholeness. Wholeness is achieved as consciousness finds its roots in the unconscious center. Only as this center, the Deep Self, comes into power and the relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness becomes activated by the center of responsibility can the 'secondary' relationships within the flow of consciousness be significant.

A number of Whitehead's principles, as well, clarify the Problem and Call. The creation of beauty in consciousness is a clearer possibility when consciousness can be understood as an art form. Whitehead writes, "Consciousness itself is the product of art in its lowliest form."<sup>6</sup> An essential aspect of art is that it is artificial. What is

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<sup>6</sup>Alfred North Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas (New York: Free Press, 1961), p. 271.

actual is the total moment of becoming. The flow of consciousness has no actuality, though it partakes of actuality. It is the flow of the awareness of abstracted, emphasized detail. It is artful.

In an actual moment of becoming the highest value to be realized is intensity of feeling. Beauty is another name for intensity of feeling garnered through the coordination of diverse feeling. The properties of Beauty, attainable in actual occasions, are imitated in art and also in consciousness. Whitehead indentifies the first quality of Beauty as Harmony, "the absence of mutual inhibition among various prehension."<sup>7</sup> Transferring this principle to consciousness and its variety of modes, the application calls for attention to the ordering of modes in a mutually enhancing sequence.

In rational thought we are accustomed to attending to the importance of sequence---thoughts must follow from one another. On the larger scale, any conscious mode can enhance what follows. Intuitive modes can enhance thinking modes, reflections enhance anticipations.

As beauty is realized in the flow of consciousness, consciousness performs the same service for Actual Life that art performs. "It exhibits...a finite fragment of human effort achieving its own perfection within its own limits."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 252.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 270.

In this way, "the conscious experience of mankind preserves for its use the sources of Harmony."<sup>9</sup> Finally, Harmony on the surface of experience is interdependent with harmony in the depths. Each form of harmony contributes to and receives from the other.

A Scriptural Reminder "Be wise as serpents and gentle as doves." (Mat. 10:16)

Christians are called to accept and nurture all aspects of conscious feeling, to be both discerning and receptive, aggressive and passive. The image that is applied to the community---many parts of the body working together for the good of the whole---can be repeated inwardly: all aspects of feeling fitted together, mutually intensifying.

Images The flow of consciousness can be thought of as a Dance. We engage in different movements in consciousness---movement outward, movement inward, thoughtful movements, imaginative movements, restrained movements, expansive movements. If the movements become balanced and full of life-rhythm we are dancing.

The Dance is never isolated from music and its music is the song of the Self, with its deep silence. All together it is a Song and Dance Routine.

In his poetry, T. S. Eliot expresses the interdepen-

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 272.

dence of the movements of dance and the stillness of each final moment.

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor  
fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance  
is,  
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from  
nor towards,  
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still  
point,  
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.<sup>10</sup>

Later, even more simply, in a single phrase, again,  
the whold routine: "We must be still and still moving."<sup>11</sup>

Time and Dimension Sense It is within the flow of  
consciousness that a new sense of time emerges. Eliot:

Not the intense moment,  
Isolated; with no before and after,  
But a life time burning in every moment<sup>12</sup>

The sense of the isolated, intense moment arises as  
one focuses on the depth of feeling involved in one moment.  
A life time burning in every moment emerges when this  
focus is kept while, at the same time, the flow of life is  
affirmed and participated in. As the sense, "all is Now",  
intensifies so does the awareness, "all things pass."

There is a double meaning to "burning in every moment."  
The immediacy and intensity of Nowness, the present Moment,  
must also be felt in its fragility: it is imminently doomed

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<sup>10</sup>Eliot, p. 177.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

to perish. Every moment within a lifetime 'burns' with passion and life and vibrancy---as a tiny, important point within the flow---like a diamond burns. And also, every moment is 'burning', soon to be ashes, easily blown. The passingness of things is redeemed as relatedness is established, history is shaped, and there is some purpose in sequence.

A dimension beyond singleness emerges that might be called wholeness, a complex togetherness throughout the flow of feeling and through inclusiveness of all the modes.

Pains and Joys The Dance goes on and on and never stops, as for the child in Hans Christian Anderson's story "The Red Shoes." There is a merciless quality to perpetual movement. Flux cannot be escaped, even in the mystical contemplation of the vividness of immediacy. To balance the flow, nothing can be grasped for long. The Dance demands perpetual letting go, dying, and again taking hold, rising.

There is a joy possible, as in the exhilaration we feel in the grace and strength of the human body. The discipline of movement that a dancer has transforms the caprice of ordinary movement into the Beauty of kinetic power. We, also, within the flow of feeling can transform the tedium of habitual pattern, or non-intentional sequence into expressive, enjoyable form energized by the aim for Beauty and serving its realization.

Aims This style of consciousness can be achieved through the aim to feel creatively. This aim can be informed by works of art and by the making of art. (Though this does not exhaust the significance of Art for life.)

Its realization is complicated by the fact that modes of feeling are so strongly influenced by what is being felt. The choice of a 'mode of consciousness' must be in response to what is being felt. Indeed, part of the discipline of art is to curb idealism. Every creation proceeds as a response to a medium. The structuring of the flow of feeling must never be in isolation from what is being felt. There has to be an aim at vividness of feeling achieved through the complex relating of many diverse aspects of feeling. Though singleness of heart is simple, wholeness is complex. The aim must be for creative inclusiveness, for the gathering of many things together, to seek and save the lost.

### For the World

Bearings A final question remains. The focus has been on the 'internal constitution' of consciousness. First, consciousness was considered as one feeling among a unity of feelings that make up an actual occasion---the Self in its most specific aspect. Then, consciousness was considered in transition, as a flow of feeling from moment to moment.

The total Christian style is constituted by a particular focus of conscious content, felt in a particular



way of feeling. A style is a certain What, felt in a certain Way.

The final question: What choice of content defines Christian consciousness?

Problem and Call Christian life has rarely been understood to be most importantly a matter of conscious experience. Mystical schools of thought within Christianity have been against the grain of the central intuition in Christian experience. The central intuition is that ultimate value in life does not rest in how things are felt, but primarily in What is felt, and secondarily in How it is felt. Consciousness is only part of total experience and Christians have felt an importance in a totality of experience that includes more than the immediate, individual awareness experience. The central Christian intuition is to be affirmed.

That is, there is other music to follow besides our own song. We dance to the music of the spheres. There are others to dance with. We are members of a dance company and our song and dance routine is in, with, and for the World.

The Call is to discipline and to maintain a style of consciousness that always reaches beyond itself. In the beginning, our song reaches beyond itself to find a tune in harmony with God's voice. In the end our dance reaches beyond itself to be a circle dance, hands joined with hands

beyond, feet moving in step with other rhythms.

Whitehead's thought clarifies this aspect of consciousness. Most important is his principle that every actuality is constituted by all the other past occasions. Our feelings are our connection to the world and our feeling is our being. There is no independent being. There is only being in interdependence, connectedness. And the way we put our feelings together goes into the being of future occasions.

This fact of existence can be incorporated into many styles. 'Personhood' is a style that feels certain past occasions as 'my own past' and anticipates certain possible future occasions as 'my own future'. Being a person is a style that focuses on the other actualities participating in any immediate moment.

The Christian style has aimed to incorporate the principle of personhood into a big-hearted style---a large openness to the others that make up the Now of a single center.

A most basic component of the Christian style is a high and celebrative regard for 'the others that are part of me.'

The Call is to poise between two forms of openness to Others. The first dance step is to tend to the feeling-content derived from the Divine Other. Christ is present. The second dance step is to tend, in response to Christ, to

the feeling content derived from the other, worldly occasions. The World is present.

When the first step is taken Christian consciousness becomes spiritual---attuned to a feeling-ultimate beyond its own way of feeling. When the second step is taken in Christian feeling consciousness becomes global---attuned to a content-ultimate beyond attention to its own past and future.

That is, our attention to Christ is centered on Christ as a source of feeling-form, and our attention to the World is focused on the World as source of what is to be felt in the Christ-feeling-form.

As our range of inclusiveness broadens there is greater tension in experience. There is more to harmonize. Finally, we must be open to Christ for Christ is the source of harmonized feeling. The comprehension of diverse, conflicting elements in a unity of feeling is the way to and meaning of Peace. And Christ is our peace.

Scriptural Reminder "We, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." (Romans 12. 5) This scripture is not a metaphorical pleasantry but the metaphysical ultimate that shapes our conscious style. It is also the most important definition of the 'human condition'. The human condition is not fundamental alienation from others or God. It is, fundamentally, a total connectedness to others, including God. Faithfulness

is defined by where we go from here.

Images and Dimensions The images that have been lifted up before, all must come together to make a whole and moving picture, as the vision of consciousness delineated in this project comes to a completion. It is difficult to imagine it all at once, so, still, I would present a series of differentiated images.

|                 |                   |                    |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| We sing,        | We dance,         | For the World.     |
| Centered on     | Balanced within   | Connected to       |
| God,            | ourselves,        | the World.         |
| Single-hearted, | Whole-hearted,    | Heart-overflowing. |
| God is silent,  | Our spirit sings, | The World cries.   |

As I seek for a final image a new set of thoughts emerges and I find, as Eliot writes,

The end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.<sup>13</sup>

The most inclusive image for the style of consciousness I urge is Suffering, especially the suffering represented in the image of Christ on the cross.

Conscious feeling is the center of intense feeling in our lives, and the center of our lives is a vortex of suffering. We feel the world as it contributes itself to be felt, as it is. We feel the world as it might have been,

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 208.

and as it could be under the influence of what God contributes to our feeling. We feel ourselves as part of the past world and as potential instruments for a new world.

Ultimately this feeling must be qualified as suffering, in part for the anguish of the contrast between what was and what could be; in part for the patience and forbearance for how it is; in part for the process of letting go in which what perishes obtains to its full potential as an instrument for new life.

Christian consciousness entails the suffering of judgment as it embodies the contrast of the Self and God's aims, and the contrast of the World-in-the-Self and God's aims.

The cross of Jesus stands as the purest symbol of the contrast between God and the World. We feel that contrast and repeat its significance in the immediacy of suffering in which the past is patiently borne and the future looms, a hope, beyond death.

Pains and Joys It is simple enough. The pain is in the bearing of one another's burdens. The joy is in the sharing of one another's victories. The pain is the pain of a cross. The joy is the manifestation in our actual life of the promise: the dead shall be raised.

The pain becomes clear and sharp when we do not sentimentally and personally enjoy our bonds of interdependence, but allow our feeling of others' situations to

dominate our consciousness. We must surrender the attachment to 'my' past and 'my' future as the ultimate values for us. We die hard. But the full joy of Christian life is not attainable apart from the full pain.

Aims Finally, it is around the image of the cross that we must shape our style of consciousness to be fully responsive to God. As we aim to confess we open ourselves to the pain of God's judgment, and hope for Truth. As we aim to create form in the flow of conscious life we open ourselves to the pain of perishing, and hope for Beauty. As we aim to lovingly include the concerns of the world-wide community we open ourselves to share the burden of other's pain, and hope for Peace. Our life is a crucible in which searing flame yields vivid, intense feeling. The tongues of flame refine our spirits, and the final product: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

### PART THREE

### SPIRITUALITY AND THE CHURCH

## CHAPTER VII

## FROM INDIVIDUAL TO COMMUNITY

Individual Suffering and the Community of Joy

Christian spirituality has been proposed in this project as a whole way of life. It is a way of life that 1) intensifies awareness and right cultivation of the individual Self in its relationship to God, 2) calls for the balance of the many modes of consciousness, and 3) urges a particular kind of personhood, the kind that surrenders itself, non-graspingly, into lives beyond its own. These three aspects of the Christian way are what I have tried to express in the description of the Song and Dance Routine. The three movements are all implicated in one basic move; the move beyond the Self into communion and community. The life of Christian wholeness is only attained in the surrender and loss of the life to the Other. God is an Other; the past and future selves are Other; the World is Other. I have suggested that such surrender, or relinquishment, be called Suffering.

From the perspective of individual Christian existence it is indeed the cross that looms as the dominant image. This does not mean that Christian existence requires accommodation to oppression, acceptance of limiting social structures, masochism, or 'submission.' These are forms of suffering that have no quality of righteousness, that is,



of communion with God. To enter into Christian life requires discernment of that quality of life that amplifies our connection to God. That quality is suffering.

However, the meaning of suffering takes on new colors when the individual struggling for spiritual existence enters into relationship with the community called the Church. Then the horizon of the individual Christian is transcended by a larger horizon. When we enter into the community the entire imagery shifts. As if we were moving from dream to waking a transformation occurs in how everything appears. While for the individual the cross is the final image for Christian life, the Church provides a perspective of joy. Beyond the Cross we see the Resurrected Body of Christ.

Let this, then, be a definition: The Church is a community emerging from the force of suffering love. It is the resurrected body of Christ. It is the bodying forth of the Christian way. The individual's perspective of the Christian way is the perspective of suffering: just as Jesus died alone on the cross, we suffer alone. The community's perspective is joy. We must see that the individual's pain is vindicated by the emergence of true community as Christ's death on the cross is vindicated in the emergence of the resurrected body. We must learn to continually move alone through the cross into the community---through the fullness of suffering love into the

presence of joyful agape.

Baptism, the ritual that brings us into membership in the Body of Christ, symbolizes this process. We die with Christ. We pass through the waters of death and rise into the resurrected life. Such rising is possible by God's grace. Such life is membership in the family of God. And the resurrection is understood as living in reconciliation---living in a holy community.

Thus the transformation from the cross to the resurrection is the transformation from private piety to communal spirituality. Perhaps, in fact, we should reserve the word spirituality for the communal Christian experience, since the gift of the spirit is the gift of a holy presence in the Church as the body of Christ. The Spirit can be seen as the Presence that animates that community, and makes it a living body. The Spirit is the communal breath. As the individual spirit is the function within that transcends every specific function, the Spirit of the community is the emergent unity that transcends the individual members. This Spirit is given to the Church as it emerges into life through the acceptance of individual suffering in communion with God. It is the gift of the presence of the Holy within the concrete experience of people.

Vindication means being taken up into a context where the meaning of an act is fulfilled. Individual faithfulness, though it is not without satisfactions, only has its

meaning fulfilled when its fruits nourish the larger body. From the individual perspective we have emphasized the values of Truth, Beauty, and Peace. Each of these is attained through the cultivation of a right relationship to God, enabling the individual to integrate the gifts of grace. But all three are in the service of a higher value: Love. Love builds on the coherence of Truth, the harmony of Beauty, the transcendent concern of Peace. Love is the name for the context of the fulfillment of value. This context is always beyond the individual; fulfillment is always through free surrender and death, through the giving up of value to a future, to another life. To love is to deliver truth, beauty and peace into the immediacy of another life. To be loved is to be openly and graciously received---to have what you give to another be transformed by the other's creative response. Thus suffering, which is submission to the other, become love, which is giving to the other.

Individual suffering is vindicated by the community because the community represents and embodies the perspective from which value is fulfilled. The community represents the pass-over from individual, private achievement into a new treasury of value. Ultimately, the community represents a more complete treasury: the realm of heaven, our final home in the heart of God. Thus, the individual suffers in hope and with the aim to love. The community will

gain what the individual suffers.

This is not to say that communal enrichment is the automatic outcome of individual Christian struggle. What is ever automatic? There may be times when the individual struggle bears no fruit in the community's life. In fact, at times the Christian's life may be, for the time being, lost and not found---except by and in God. We can go forward on the faith that there is always a divine vindication of the individual struggle. Such divine enrichment will flow back into an individual's life, so that the Christian will experience a sense of blessedness even in the midst of suffering, or when estranged from the community.

#### From Consciousness to Art-Work

The contrast of individual suffering and communal joy is an essential contrast in the Christian life. It points to the dramatic contrast at the heart of the gospel story: Cross/Resurrection. These are the images that have been suggested as central in this project. A generalization can now be made: Christian life is a life of intensity achieved through the harmonization of particular contrasts.

This project began with a consideration of personal consciousness. We saw that consciousness itself is the product of contrast and were able to ask what significant contrasts were most important to the Christian style of life. This question made it possible to give a picture of Christian

spirituality as it could be manifested in Christianized consciousness.

However, Christian life is not fulfilled on the level of personal consciousness alone. As we broaden our perspective to include the whole Christian community we transcend personal consciousness and must employ a more inclusive category than consciousness to characterize the style of life to be aimed for.

I suggest that the more inclusive category is "Art-Work." Whitehead has said that consciousness is the product of art in its lowliest form. This is because consciousness is the product of contrast. A religious style is characterized by what the 'essential' or 'focal' contrasts are. As we move to speak of the spirituality of the Church our attention continues to be on those 'root contrasts', but the product is no longer personal consciousness. Rather it is what we can call the "Art-Work of Community." This term is suggested because of its dual conotation of 'feeling' and 'doing.' Art focuses on aesthetic experience: the experience of 'feeling contrast together'. Work points to the fact that aesthetic experience is a creative act. The term has a certain ambiguity because we rarely think of creative art work as a communal activity, though it certainly can be, as when a symphony plays or a drama group acts.

Each of these three contrasts that characterize Christian spirituality on the individual level has an

analog on the community level. Thus, the same contrasts that yield Christian consciousness expanded to the communal dimension will yield Christian community---Christian Art-Work.

## CHAPTER VIII

## THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHURCH

Once we enter into the level of communal life the focal contrasts can be expressed as 1) the contrast between the Church and God, 2) the contrast between members within the Church, and 3) the contrast between the Church and the World. Each of these contrasts will be discussed in turn with attention first on detailing the components of the contrasts, and then on the call to achieve a particular form of contrast. Finally this call will be discussed in connection with a particular 'discipline' of communal life. These disciplines will be Liturgy, Church Order, and Mission.

The Church and God

The Contrast As a community, the Church collectively relates to God as judge and redeemer. The Church struggles to embody God's aim for human loving interdependence. God's vision for the Church always stands in contrast to what the Church is. Just as the individual's conscious experience is vivified by contrasting the way one could be and the way one is, the Church's Art-Work is the work of recognizing what it is and what it is called to become.

This means that a critical awareness of the community from an internal perspective is a basic aspect of the Spirituality of the Church. Critical work has two aspects:

1) recognizing the Church as it is, and 2) understanding the call of what the Church is to become.

The Call The Call is to open ourselves as a community to the power and presence of God. This presence judges and redeems the Church. The vitality, or spirituality, of the Church depends on cultivation of this contrast. This means we do not unconditionally think of the Church as God's representative on earth, but always approach it with an attitude of questioning judgment.

The call is to harmonize the life of the Church with Christ, as the word of creative transformation. In this way we are called to be an eschatological community---to live in the tension between what we are and the possibility of what we can become.

As we are, we have already received the gift of the Spirit: life has been breathed into the community by the present and uniting force of God. What we can become is represented in the image of Christ: perfect love, perfect creative responsiveness to each other, through our relationship to God.

We are called to accept our community, judge our community and keep alive the perspective of call. This is the eschatological perspective. It is Hope.

Discipline, Liturgy In its life---in its Art-Work---the Church must pursue a discipline in which it acts out the



contrast of God and the Church in such a way as to facilitate the right relationship with God. This is the place of Liturgy.

When the community gathers to worship, it gathers to act out the vision and the call of Christian life. We share together at the Lord's Table to act out the hope and promise of solidarity with one another and with God. The dramatic and symbolic activities of the Church's life are central to its eschatological nature. To sing and dance the possibilities grasped is to related to Christ as the lyric leader of the dance, the artist of new life who beguiles, bemuses, surprises and pleases us in the contours of his dance. Liturgy is the focal point of the Church's relationship with God, and in our liturgical action we respond to the ministry of Christ the Dancer.

The forms of our worship express the shape and the content of our hope, and the awareness of our hope is what enables a more concrete achievement. We must ask ourselves, what are the visions that we most importantly should strive to express in our communal symbolic action, i. e. in our worship?

First of all, we must continually and even increasingly express the hope of community. In this regard our traditions supply us with rich resources. Most important is the tradition of the Eucharist. Conceived and celebrated as a messianic banquet, a feast of thanks-giving for the promise

of the Kingdom, Eucharist is not an outmoded expression of the possibility of global community and global concern. Conceived as a memorial for Christ's death and resurrection it is a dramatic re-enactment of the relationship between suffering and love. I see a need in our churches to vitalize the experience, not only by making it more accessible to feeling, but by strengthening the poignancy of its expression in terms of words, movements, and music; and by making it the normative Sunday service. Global consciousness surely centers on the image of brothers and sisters sitting at God's table together. This experience, when entered into with expressive and dramatic clarity, may be completely adequate for the Christian way of life. One wonders if our liturgy needs to be anything else. One wonders why we spend so much of our time in many denominations with worship experiences that lack the expressive depth of the Eucharist.

Within the liturgical form of Eucharist three communal activities should be especially emphasized in addition to the sharing of the bread and wine. These are 1) the confession of sin, with the proclamation of absolution, 2) the proclamation of the Word, and 3) the prayers of the people for the world.

1) Confession of Sin. Though not part of the Church's earliest forms of Eucharist, attunement to the pattern of God's judgment and grace---God's valuation and re-creation---is the framework for intensified awareness of

and faithfulness to God's relationship to the Church.

When we are alone we strive to know ourselves in the presence of God. We do this by thorough self-examination and a genuine turning toward God as judge and redeemer. Confession of sin in public worship can serve as a lure toward this personal act. More importantly, communal confession of sin allows us to become deeply sensitive to our full place before God: we are before God together, as an interdependent community, part of society. There are failures, rebellions, modes of alienation and outright evils that we are communally responsible for. These must be confessed together, for we are guilty together, we are judged in the ways of our togetherness. God's grace provides for communal redemption. It makes possible the emergence of new life from the sins of oppression, consumerism, militarism, and the rape of the environment. We can seek a social birth of righteousness. We have a solidarity in good and in evil. God's judging and redeeming action embraces our solidarity. The loving and creative response of God to our communal sin is dramatized in the words of absolution.

In the discipline of confession we learn to sing, to tune our song to the cosmic dimension, and to find its impetus toward resolution and harmony.

2) Proclamation of the Word. The way in which we proclaim the Word of God more than any other activity in the Church's life witnesses to the role of vision in

Christian experience. In this we relate to the grace of God. The preached word makes use of the luring and enabling function of thought, language, and imagery. The vision---a hope, a promise, a calling---must primarily be articulated in a form that stimulates clear desire for its actualization and in fact enables actualization by making way for the move from idea to concretization. This means the vision should not be preached as if getting hold of the ideas as ideas were the aim. The aim of preaching is to present ideas in the modes that make them most accesible to practice. This is the reason that in the explication of the vision in this project it has been important to express poetic images to help carry the ideas and make them more available for feeling.

It is, thus, in proclamation of the Word that the Church as an eschatological community witnesses to the transformative and life-giving power of Christ. The rest of the Church's symbolic life should take its cue from such creative proclamation. In preaching, expressive language creates lures for feeling and realizing new values, new possibilities, contrasts to the present order. This is done by grasping the gift of Christ as the transforming word. To stimulate eros toward the not-yet is one purpose of the eschatological community, the Church.

3) Prayers for the World. The beginning of global consciousness is to draw the world into one's circle of

concern. The gathered community should never come together in worship without indicating the size of its concern and that size should encompass the earth as a complex ecosystem of humans, animals, plant, rocks. Prayers for the world are a simple expression of the size of our concern, but such prayers can never be easy. The need to pray for the world is the need to discern the world situations. Pains and conflicts must be recognized, joys and successes must be celebrated. The clearsighted awareness of the world requires, again, the move to a transcendent standpoint, the move to be 'not of the world'. This is again the eschatological perspective---consciousness of what is not but might be (pain), and of what might not have been, yet is (joy). This is one way in which we have our concern, and one meaning of what it is to be concerned. Prayers for the world also involve the communal exercise of forbearance, openness and sharing in the suffering of the world. We love the world as we bear its pain, and as we recognize what is beautiful in it.

At times, the weight of the world's distress can be overwhelming to sensitive Christians. If we pray well we don't finish with our concern by expressing it in prayer; we only intensify it. At times it is as if Christians take responsibility to mourn for the world, for the loss of human life because of structures of injustice; for the end of a species because of human indifference to non-human

values. The eschatological community does have a promise: Blessed are the ones who mourn, for they shall be comforted. This should give us courage to draw the world into ourselves as our own burden, as God's.

In addition to affirming these basic aspects of Christian worship, I would also like to recommend the exploration of new worship forms. Christians are artist's of liturgy and in new times the liturgical life may be enriched by new forms.

Worship styles are already diverse among our churches. Inasmuch as Christian spirituality is made more manifest in a unified Church, it seems important to maintain the one essential liturgical practice, that is, Eucharist. But other forms can be explored.

What follows is an outline and description of a liturgical celebration especially related to the form of spirituality suggested in this paper. (See next page for outline.)

This liturgy forms a pattern of silence and stillness, moving to word, to music, to action, to dance, to stillness and prayer. This movement is simple and natural: silence, sound; stillness, dancing; singleness, unity. The pattern is not merely a cycle since the concluding quiet is a quiet of outward-turning concern, a change from the initial silence which is intended as private and solitary to a communal prayerfulness.

## A Song and Dance Liturgy

### I. Gathering: We gather to reflect, meditate, seek God.

The people gather in silence and sit in silent meditation for thirty minutes.

A Call to Confession is read, or sung, or dramatized.

A Common Confession is made.

Forgiveness is proclaimed.

The people Greet one another with signs of love.

### II. Celebration: We act out our relationship to one another and to God.

The Gloria is sung.

Eucharist is celebrated.

A Hymn of Thanksgiving or Acclamation is sung.

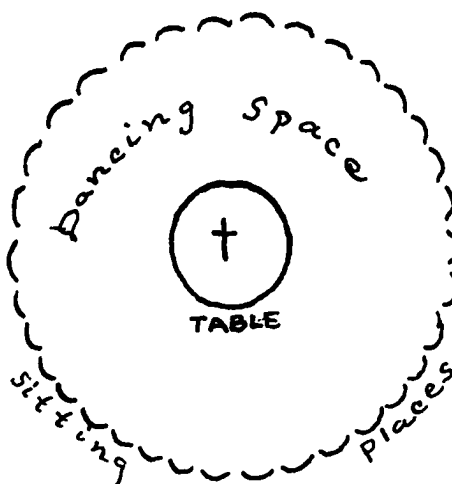
### III. Dance: We show the meaning of our lives in movement.

The people sing and dance together.

### IV. Prayers: We gather the world into our circle of concern.

The people say Prayers for each other, the community and the world.

A Benediction is given.



The symbols of this liturgy relate to the three basic aspects of Christian spirituality: The Church with God in silence, the Church with itself, and the Church with others.

This liturgy also holds symbols for the work of Christ. Christ's suffering death is imitated in our confessional silence. Christ's work of redemption in that death is proclaimed in the announcement of forgiveness. Christ's resurrection is celebrated in the communal meal and the dance. Christ's establishment of the Church as his Body is enacted in the communal meal. Christ's works of love are 'followed after' in our prayers of concern, which implicates us in the enactment of love.

This liturgy is meant, all in all, as an embodiment of the Word; a dramatization and symbolization of the Gospel. The Word is present only implicitly and quietly, but every act flows from it. Preaching the word is momentarily left aside (other services should be held for the focus on preaching), and physical and communal enactment of the word is to the fore.

This liturgy is intentionally non-hierarchical. The people should do it together. One dominant leader would be against its spirit, though the presence of clergy is important as a symbol for the enabling presence of the whole church. I would recommend its practice in a circle: a circular table in the center, a large open space for dancing,



an outside ring of chairs. The circle form echoes our equal sharing in grace, and the mutuality and centeredness of our concern.

Surely it is in fact possible for a congregation to dance. The movement need not be fast. It is high time that Christians ease their whole bodies into the motions of Christian life. If we can learn to dance together we should find it easier to extend a hand with food for a starving neighbor, or easier to extend our arms in comfort to a friend.

Next to communion I can imagine no more poignant or symbolic action for our times than dancing. In the familiar folk song, "Lord of the Dance," it is the pharisees who refuse to dance with Christ. But the age of 'straight-laced' renunciation of the world, denial of the flesh, and cloistering of the heart is behind us. Our time calls us to concrete, bodily, embracing movement.

It should be noted that the Church in fact possesses a fine inheritance of dance music in its heritage of folk music and carols. The carols deserve special attention. Their origins are with the folk and with the dance. The Christmas carols are familiar, but there are also Lenten carols, Passion carols, Easter, Pentecost, Spring, Summer and Fall Carols. This music is beautiful, spiritual, singable and danceable. And, with our Jewish brothers and sisters and with the Shakers we have a heritage of congrega-

tional, liturgical dance. These are places to begin.

### The Church and Its Members

The Contrast The Church exists in time and space as the mutual interdependence of many individuals. It is, in Whitehead's terms, a society of actual occasions. Or, to put it in our own common image: the Church is a body with many members. Its spirituality is partly constituted by the contrast of the one and the many, and more specifically by the contrast of one function among many functions, that is, the contrast of part to whole. This contrast includes the relationship of past to present in time and the relationship of here and there in space.

The Call The call is, first of all, to have the relationship among the members be characterized by love. Love means several things. On the one hand it means each member relates to the others with receptive openness, with the aim to make the other members members of oneself. This means taking in their concern, their ways of receiving the world, their burdens and pains. Love means letting the many be in each one of the community in an inclusive, non-imposing way. This is one way the one/many contrast expresses the spirituality of the Church.

Love also means that the many seek a communal unity. The Church is called to be One, to be ecumenical. The oneness is achieved through the harmonization of many

functions within the body of Christ; with each part finding Art-Work to do to create the whole as a beautiful organism. On the largest level this means that every division of the ecumenical body, every denomination, recognize its relationship to the whole and work among the whole body to make a particular contribution. On the more local level this call is for different aspects of Church order to be mutually supportive and creative, and each individual to find a contributing function for the whole.

In this call the form and structure of works of art can be a model. In a work of art many parameters are coordinated to produce one expressive whole. This is also our calling as the Christian community.

The Discipline: Church Order We need to develop our approach to Church order as a spiritual discipline: the discipline of being a living body. The different activities of Church life are to be affirmed. Forms of polity, from the earliest times, have been expressive of the variety of gifts important for the life of the Church as a body. The New Testament imagery of the many parts of the body functioning together in a healthy body is a vivid image for the spirituality of Church order.

Consideration of three important areas delineates the spiritual discipline in Church order: 1) the gift of the past, 2) the gift of special skills, and 3) the gift of the future.

1) The Gift of the Past. The Church body is sustained, in part, by the communion of saints, the abiding presence of past generations of Christians. Part of Church Order is the way in which this relationship to the past is felt and manifested in community life. The attitude toward tradition and authority is expressive of Spiritual values. Our spirituality involves an attitude of both continuity and discontinuity with the past. We receive the tradition and we transcend the tradition. We are radical conservatives; we change from a center of preservation.

Just as individual Christian spirituality involves an affirmation of a style of 'personhood' that claims past experience as 'my own', the spirituality of the Church is historical. The whole past is part of the living body of Christ; it is to be claimed, received, and transformed. This is the best meaning of 'historical existence'. Historical existence also has the possibility of being merely conservative which means being possessive and exclusive. In the discipline of maintaining a connection to the past in the forms of Church life we must do so in contrast to the style that values freedom as discontinuity and recommends total inclusiveness by the absence of judgment. It is increasingly important, as the Western Church meets the East, to intensify the contrasts between continuity/discontinuity and inclusiveness/exclusiveness. To intensify the

contrasts does not mean to feel the one style as increasingly different from the other, but to feel the one style as nearer and nearer to the other. To contrast is to harmonize, that is to unify. We must move toward this new style of communal spirituality. Our style already goes in this direction, since we seek to be historical with total freedom: to completely include the past, and completely transcend it when that is the call.

2) The Gift of Special Skills. As the individual Christian is called to cherish and harmonize the many modes of consciousness, the spirituality of the community involves the interaction of many skills. We create together the life and ministry of the Church by the contributions we can make to each other through our particular gifts. Within the context of the community we are freed from the burden of needing to do everything. This allows for the mutual intensification of individual skills and creates communal harmony.

The relationship among the many gifts---teaching, healing, preaching, having imagination, having perspective, etc, should not be dominantly hierarchical. Complementarity and equality should be continually affirmed, not compartmentalization and regimentation.

We divide Church life into many activities and tasks: worship, education, service, administration. We do these activities through many small, special groups:

planning groups, study groups, preparing groups. Groups think, groups organize, groups search, groups practice. The body has many members. Our style of Christian existence affirms the division of activities---and calls us to make the relationships among the Church's tasks an image of loving interdependence.

Each member must struggle to feel how the fulfillment of a gift is to be found in contributing to the wholeness of the community. This is our Art-Work. As an individual strengthens her own inward complexity and complementarity of modes of life, non-oppressive ways of relating thinking, feeling, willing, and imaging are found. So also the plurality of the modes of Church life must seek the harmony of a balanced dancing, through attunement to a central song, sung as the community gathers to worship.

3) The Gift of the Future. Part of the discipline of the spirituality of the Church is to provide for some form of continuation and new emergence of the lifestyle in the future. This is the task of Christian Education. Both adults and children have a future that will benefit from education.

The Church must order its life in ways that provide opportunities for adults to intentionally engage in the learning process. It should be pointed out that education itself embodies a spiritual style: the style of receiving and transforming experience. The act of receiving includes the

processes of recognition, expression and identification. We move from reception to transformation through analysis, contrast, imagination and finally, to creative action.

In the process we follow after Christ who receives and transforms the world. The suffering Christ is our image for the first stage of the process of education. The risen Christ is our image for the second stage, the emergence of novel possibility. All educational activities within the Church must aim at directing persons into the influence of Christ's pedagogy. Christ is the one still present and receptive, and still before us as a lure. As education progresses the forms of education must fade and break and Christ rise in experience as the Divine Teacher.

We see then that Christian education, especially for adults, is the cultivation of a process that makes new futures possible. This 'learning process' provides for the insitutionalization of hope. It is the concrete action that allows the transformation of the present order. Hence, education makes for liberation, new freedom. What is most important to learn is the process. Broadened to its greatest generality, learning is the practice of eschatological spirituality.

With regard to children, the discipline is more specific. We have the responsibility of passing Christian spiritual existence on to a new generation in its aliveness, and in such a way as to provide for its transcendence.

Practically speaking this vision of spiritual existence would have these implications for the education program of the Church:

1. Teachers should be called to the awareness of themselves as friends to children who provide a model pattern for the children, and who must communicate that model by their concrete action. Their teaching must be grounded in their own relationship to Christ as teacher.

2. The education program should include the practice of liturgy. Experiences of art, imagination, drama and symbol should be nurtured in such a way as to provide for a developed sensitivity to the Christian life as a creative life. The education program concretely should allow, for example, children to act out the events of the gospel through the long drama of the church year. We should teach our children the skills of singing, dancing, making poems, pictures and plays. Perhaps the early years of Christian education should be wholly devoted to aesthetic nurture.

3. Inasmuch as patterns of life are supported by knowledge, children should be taught the content of our tradition. Christian life exists in history, as a pattern through time, and knowledge of the past---past events, past ideas, past expressions of the faith---makes possible a connection that gives life shape. Knowledge should be passed on in the context of a way of life. It can be experienced



as deadening, but mainly when it has been isolated from a fuller life context.

In sum, Christian education of children for spiritual existence should a) take place in the context of a student-teacher relationship that is loving, mutual and rooted in the divine/human relationship; b) include development of artistic and aesthetic skills as skills for eschatological living; c) include transmission of the tradition of knowledge and understanding as the contextualization of Christian life in a historical flow.

Through Christian education the gift of the future is brought into the ordered life of the Church, building up the life of the body and making us more fully members of one another.

### The Church and the World

The Contrast The final significant contrast for the spirituality of the Church is between the Church and the World. This contrast has been felt in various ways in the history of Christianity. The Church has been felt as over/against the world. The Church has been felt as encompassing the world. Furthermore, a contrast within the Church has been made between the invisible, true Church and the visible Church; between the Church universal and the Church particular, between the present Church and the triumphant Church to come. Which of these many possible

contrasts is to be affirmed as important for the Church's spirituality today?

First of all, some contrast between the Church as it is and the Church as it is called to be must be maintained. The contrast between the Church and God points to this. It is the central meaning of the Church as an eschatological community. It is oriented to a call from God to become more than it is. Contrast within the Church of the 'true' church and the 'apparent' church only has importance as a way to judge the aspects of the present Church that do not fulfill the call. This critical perspective is best maintained by focusing on the contrast between the Church as it is and as it could become. A certain amount of true faithfulness may characterize the Church even as it is. Luther's image of the Church as a house under construction is most helpful. We are always simultaneously redeemed and in need of redemption.

What is the contrast between the Church and the World? First of all, we cannot think of the Church as over/against the world because we believe the love of God in Christ is universally offered to all. In the world context the Church represents a particular response to Christ; but hardly the only place where God relates to the world. We can see, then, that the Church is a specific, intentional community within the world where a certain style of life is created, sustained and transformed. Our question becomes,

what relationship to the world is involved in this style of life?

The Church is in the world, part of the world. On the one hand, it relates to a call from 'beyond the world', that is the call of God that represents a world of not-yet; this is the contrast of Christ and the Church. On the other hand the Church relates to the world as it is. What is this special relationship?

The Call The call for how the Church should relate to the world is expressed in the paradox, life is found in the losing of life. The community of the Church has its final purpose in the call to open itself completely to the world and give itself over to the world. The body of Christ is the body that loses its life in the world in such a way as to find life for itself, and to give life to the world.

This means that the Church, finally, does not exist as a cloistered community. It is true that a certain amount of vivid value is attained by elimination and exclusion. Value is also to be gained through the harmonization of breadth. We live in the tension between the two as individuals and as a community. Our call is to harmonize and bring together. But we never rest with this; every attained harmony is to be transcended by the lure toward greater value within complexity. The Church must always be moving to bring the World into itself, and to spill itself

into the world. Dynamic tension, flow, persistent creativity: these are the final words inviting the Church to fullness of life.

The Discipline: Mission The practical activity of the Church that expresses and develops this style of spirituality is Mission. Mission, like education, is a twofold process of reception and response. Only as we open ourselves to the whole global situation is the full range of Christian value activated. Reception of the world begins with non-judgmental openness. Non-judgmental openness is not a passive stance, however. We must actively and intentionally turn our gaze upon the world. We must open our eyes, and abolish the fear of looking at either the beauty or the injury we may find around us. From this receptive openness we must move to look with critical discernment. Our tradition provides the framework for value judgments, but we must actively apply what we know, and learn again and always more fully to recognize what is in contrast to God's hope for the world: oppression, lack of freedom, unnecessary violence, ill-health, starvation, death where there could be life.

We have a responsibility to speak our witness to the world. To protest, proclaim and prophesy. But if our relationship to the world ends here then we are cloistering ourselves, following the way that leads away from life. We move on from critical discernment to loving action.

Our serving activity will only be as good as our discernment of problems, and our discernment of problems will only be as good as our spiritual courage to face any demand. When this spiritual courage is deep and strong our missional activity will have the depth of support required for true service.

It is not the aim of this discussion to identify what the present needs of the world are or to recommend the creative action we need to take. The immediate aim is to clarify the context of the Church's mission in the life of the Church as a spiritual community. We need to feel how mission is rooted in our spirituality or we may fail to have the strength to relate in true love to the world. If we miss the loving relationship to the world we will lose our life as a spiritual community and it will not be the good death of suffering love, but the death that only breeds continued loss of value.

As we intensify our missional activity the full meaning of our spiritual existence as individuals and as a communal body becomes concrete. We feel in completeness that the meaning of spiritual existence encompasses the meanings of justice, liberation, relationship, creativity, intensity, uniqueness, inclusiveness, oldness, newness--- life instead of death.

We find that in the attainment of spiritual existence these things come into focus: our solidarity in good and

evil; the primacy of suffering and renunciation in the achievement of joy; the judging and gracious presence of God; the irradiation of righteousness in the forms of consciousness, the forms of sense experience, the forms of action, and the forms of community. These things are the particular values for our life together with each other, with the world, and with God.

## THEOLOGICAL POSTSCRIPT

Spirit and Spirituality

The effort to relate individual and communal spirituality focuses attention on the precise meaning of 'spirituality'. The word's significance is located in the meaning of spirit and The Spirit.

We have many associations with Spirit. We speak of it as the special gift to the church. We use images of fire and the descending dove. We speak of it as the indwelling presence of God, or as the comforting presence. We imagine it as unearthly, bodiless, like wind or breath. Or, we imagine it as the aspect of 'aliveness' that is separate from the body. At the same time we use 'spirit' to name the lurking presences in the natural world, the earth. We use 'spirit' to name the essence of something. This usage, like the 'nature spirits' has an immanent and material overtone.

Reflecting on the richness of the meaning of 'spirit' two features stand out. These are the features I believe should be amplified. First, there is an association of spirit with presence. This is the most important meaning we associate with God's Spirit; it means God's presence. This same connotation allows us to speak of 'ghostly spirits', those vague presences we feel. We also speak of 'unseen presences' and of 'presence in spirit.' This connotation of

spirit is part of most of our usage. Our images for spirit---wind, breath, fire, bird, vapor---all express the elusive quality that accompanies the disturbing awareness of presence.

The second important association we make with spirit is unity. We speak of oneness in spirit and of community spirit. For Augustine the Spirit was the image for the unity of the persons of the Trinity, the one bond of love. In general this is not the unearthly quality of spirit, but spirit as it is associated with the essentials of things. The 'one spirit' is the essence of a relationship that exists between people. It is the elemental unity and relationality. This is why in Christian theology the Spirit is associated so strongly with the Church. In this association it is not the presence of God that is expressed most clearly but the unity that is given to the community. This is no disembodied wisp, but the embodied relationality of the community.

In a certain way the two important meanings coalesce, as is natural in a symbol. Unity is the result of presence. Unity in a love relationship is the result of individuals accepting and nurturing the presence of other persons in themselves. The real presence of one in another is understood in Whiteheadian thought as a positive prehension. The felt-presences are harmonized into a concrete unity in every concrescent occasion. When this aspect of being-



becoming is heightened in feeling we may begin to speak of a spiritual existence. This is a style of life in which the emergence of particular unity from a plurality of felt presences is consciously attended to. Spiritual existence involves the identification of the Self with the aspect of being-becoming that is responsible for the emergence of particular unity. Roughly speaking, this is the subjective aim of a becoming occasion. Spiritual existence also involves feeling emergent particularity, and not some earlier phase of feeling, as the True Self.

Unity in a community is the result of mutual prehension among the members. This unity resides in the concrete experience of individuals. Most importantly, perhaps, it resides in God. One meaning of the gift of the Spirit as the special gift to the Church is that it is the presence of God's feeling of the Church as one community flowing into us collectively. We can mutually create community. We may also receive community as a gift from God. Our tradition affirms that God indeed pours out this gift. Not only marriages but also churches are made in heaven.

Generally speaking, we can say that spirituality has to do with relationality. The pursuit of spiritual existence is first the quest to heighten relationality personally, interpersonally, and with God. When spirituality is conceived of as relationality it becomes difficult to see it as only private and personal. It also become difficult to

see it as world-denying or ascetic or cloistered. The view of spirituality as a special calling for a few introverted, self-denying and lonely Christians can be left behind.

Christian spirituality is a step beyond the cultivation of spiritual existence. Relationality requires information to have value. Christian spirituality is spiritual existence shaped by Christ as the principle of creative transformation. Christian spirituality is Christ united with Spirit.

### God as Spirit

We must turn now to ask how this understanding of spirit affects our language about God.

Throughout the discussion in these pages the language about God has been intended to be evocative. Language about God is important in the process of rightly relating to God. There is a traditional impetus toward unifying our imagery for God. This traditional impetus is to be cherished and carried forward because it is what allows the preservation and development of the most powerful intuition of the Judeo-Christian tradition: God is One and there is One God. Professor James Sanders urges his students to be "mono-theizing pluralists." This is precisely what our tradition has always done through its struggle with the doctrine of the Trinity. The Trinity is the image of mono-theized plurality. The doctrine of the Trinity

allows us a plurality of images for God and a complexity of imagery for God without losing the singularity and particularness of God and without our monotheism becoming monochromatic, monotoned or monotonous.

These pages have spoken of uniting the heart with God, of relating to God as gracious judge, of imitating the Suffering Death and participating in the Resurrection of Christ. What is the integration of these images for our relationship to the Divine?

I would like to suggest that we speak of Spirit as the uniting image---the image for God in Wholeness. This suggestion leads to ideas for how we might reformulate the image of the Trinity.

The traditional image of Father, Son and Holy Spirit can only be received critically and no longer can or should function as completely 'informative' as we approach God. It is oppressively patriarchal as the only or central image for the wholeness of God. Even when the Holy Spirit is granted a feminine status, the Male Father is still the dominant and most inclusive aspect of God. At the same time, at least from my perspective, it would be a deprivation of our understanding of God to abolish completely the image of God as Father; especially when we understand that God as Father represents a transformation from viewing God as All-powerful King and Ruler, to viewing God in the intimate and relational terms of parent. Though surely the familial

nearness of God is equally well expressed in the image of God as Mother, Sister, Brother, Lover, or Child.

The Father image is charged with three powerful qualities: domination, intimacy, and maleness. (I use 'maleness' as the most general term for the mythic, symbolic male qualities. These include the male principle as creative word, as order, as direction, as judgment, etc.)

It is the Father as dominant that is the most reprehensible aspect of our image of God. The Father as Dominant can be seen as a projection justifying the oppressive nature of patriarchal culture. The domination of God the Father finds its main support in the doctrine of God the Father as the "first" person of the Trinity. This image must be transcended.

The image of God as intimate and relational is not offensive to me. It is, in fact, liberating to think of God as being as near and close to me as a parent. But this image of God is not particularly supported by the Trinitarian Doctrine which mainly identifies God's parental relationship to Jesus, not to us. Rather, this image is sustained by the New Testament witness, in the picture of Jesus' teaching on God, and the picture of Jesus' relationship to God. I do not believe the question is whether it is appropriate to thinki of God in intimate relationship with us, though some might question this. Our tradition clearly affirms this intimacy. It can be questioned whether the male designation

of our divine companion is still faithful.

The maleness of God as Father conveys a huge and ambiguous complex of imagery. The meaning of male imagery is always in contrast to female imagery. If we are going to apply sexual imagery to God the only non-oppressive option is to use both male and female imagery. The other option is complete neutralization which is also likely to dull or destroy mono-theizing pluralism. Some have attempted such a transition by naming God "Father-Mother"; or by retaining the image of God the Father, with Christ as the Son and indentifying the Holy Spirit as female. God as Father-Mother is a challenging image but not evocative of a feeling tone for God. Since we have never experienced a person who was physically androgynous this image mythicizes God in a de-personalizing way. The problem of bringing the feminine in by ascribing this gender to the Holy Spirit is equally unsatisfactory. A male dominated Trinity remains in which the clear and focal persons are male. The Holy Spirit is the most ambiguous member of the Trinity---almost a shadow. Naming it female has more irony than grace. But I believe it is in a re-examination of what we express in the image of the Spirit that we can work a transformation of our image of the Trinity in such a way as to have a monotheized plurality of imagery that helps us establish a living, vivid and holy relationship to the Divine.

Taking off on Daniel Day Williams' language I

suggest that we say that the Triune God is the Spirit and the Forms of Love. The Spirit is the perfect presence and unity of being-becoming and the forms of love are imaged in two aspects---from the analog of human experience---male and female, creative love and sustaining love. The Spirit is neutral; it embraces the qualities of all creation, which in so many forms is neuter. The non-sexuality of water, rocks and stars ought to have an analog in how we image the divine or else we will continue to make a travesty of the relationship between the divine and nature and humans.

We must re-distribute the balance of power in the Trinity. The Spirit can be the image for the inclusive unity, the whole holiness of God. By transposing the Spirit from third place to first place in the Trinity the patriarchal hierarchy of the Trinity dissipates. The last becomes first: a reversal that abolishes order altogether.

We could then envision the Trinity as a single Spirit with two aspects: one male and one female. I would recommend the assimilation to each side all the familial images for each sex. Thus, God the feminine is God as Mother, Daughter, Wife, Sister; and God the masculine is God as Father, Son, Husband, Brother. The parent/child imagery can retain its symbolic power as the representation of the immanent/transcendent contrast. God the Father is the masculine aspect of God in its transcendent mode; God the Son

is the immanent masculine aspect of God. God the Mother is the transcendent feminine aspect of God, the all inclusive Realm of Heaven perhaps. The Incarnation of the feminine aspect of God is the holy community, the Church.

It is not my intention in this postscript to present a totally conceived re-formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity, but to suggest a possible trinitarian symbolic framework as a context for re-imagining God.

As we formulate new names and faces for God we need a sense of direction. We need to be in touch with the lure for new feeling. The search is for a revivifying of the deepest intuitions of our tradition: that God is One, Transcendent, Immanent, Transforming, Sustaining, Particular, Universal, Judging, Gracious, Loving, Creative and In Relationship With The World---with lions, crickets, trees, volcanoes, seas, sun, moon, stars, atom bombs, women, men, children, near and far, then and now and to come. Our very lives circle around our appreciation of this relationship. Even when our language has become blurred, even as we try to loosen our tongues, still we are sought by God and still we are called and given grace for the realization of rightness in relationship with the Divine.

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